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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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American Pride and Power

POWERFUL men and nations are in greater peril from their own illusions than from their neighbors' hostile designs. Their power secures them against untoward attempts upon their privileges and possessions, even though it may arouse jealous hostility in the neighbors. But it does not protect them against their own follies, which are indeed aggravated by the privileges of power.

Our own nation has achieved a degree of power in the contemporary world community which dwarfs the dominions of the empires of the past. In a few short decades we have progressed from continental isolation to the undisputed hegemony of the "western" world. Though it cannot be said that we carry the royal purple of our authority with complete ease, we have not done too badly in sensing the scope of our responsibilities and in learning to discharge new duties. Yet we are in obvious danger of being beguiled by the pride which tends to corrupt the powerful. One form of this pride is the pretension that our power is the natural fruit of our virtue. It is the unvarying conceit of the privileged and the powerful to obscure the fortuitous circumstances which contributed to their favored position, and to attribute it solely to their diligence or their courage, their wisdom or their shrewdness.

The American form of this conceit is the illusion that our economic strength, which is the obvious source of our political authority, is the fruit of a wisdom which no other nation has achieved. We speak with more and more idolatrous reverence of the "American way of life." We mean many things by that phrase; but primarily we seem to mean the "free enterprise system." We pity the nations of Europe, even when they contend against tyranny as resolutely as we, because we imagine that they do not understand, as we do, that

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the basis of democratic health and of economic prosperity is the least possible regulation of the economic process. We assume that the Europeans are poor because they lack our wisdom, failing to understand that they have learned some facts about life and society, unknown to us, precisely because poverty has been their teacher.

The American conceit is aggravated by our successive encounter with two forms of tyranny. What could be simpler than to play the role of the moral hero when the villains, who act as a foil for our virtue, are so obviously evil? Since tyranny is a great evil, so runs our argument, the greatest good in civic affairs is that form of society which stands in sharpest contrast to tyranny. Unfortunately the logic is mistaken. Anarchy stands in completest contradiction to tyranny; but it tends to breed tyranny, even as tyranny breeds anarchy. A stable justice must seek for order under conditions of freedom, and for freedom in the framework of order. This is the truth which the non-Communist world has learned in great travail. We in this country have not learned the lesson too well because economic conditions on our continent have been so favorable, and our technical achievements have been so tremendous, that we could beguile ourselves with the illusion that justice and order flow automatically from pure freedom.

Actually the uniquely American approach to social and economic problems, which we ascribe to our superior wisdom, is an atrophied form of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century liberalism. It was once the weapon of the middle classes in their encounter with aristocratic privilege. It has become the ideology of the industrial plutocracy, which desires as little political control over its economic power as possible. It is not the guarantee of our economic health, but a hazard to it.

It is furthermore a great embarrassment in our relation to the democratic world. The more we indulge in an uncritical reverence for the supposed wisdom of our American way of life, the more odious we make it in the eyes of the world, and the more we destroy our moral authority, without which our economic and military power will become impotent. Thus we are undermining the reality of our power by our uncritical pride in it.

Reinhold Niebuhr

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The Undergraduate and Political Responsibility

Howard Mumford Jones

IN THIS country a continuing popular attitude toward academic education illustrates the polarities of college life, and these I shall try to define. On the one hand, it is a good thing to send your son or daughter to the university; on the other hand, when your offspring graduates, you will have to knock a deal of nonsense out of him. Parents point with pride to the high grades their child earns in college; but they deprecate the very bookishness they send him to acquire. The college professor is still "impractical"; but he is nevertheless so unprincipled and persuasive a demon that, unless you administer the teachers' oath to him and watch him like a hawk, he is sure to turn your child's mind toward the red end of the political spectrum. In sum, we grant as a nation that education is a noble way to strengthen young faith in moral idealism; and, viewing colleges as godless places, keep them forever under the surveillance of priests, ministers and rabbis, not to speak of legislative committees and other investigators.

These polarities are traditional. The familiar image which sets the college somewhere between the poet's garden and the market place hits on essential truth: we can never fully immerse college life in the stream of event, nor can we fully withdraw it from that rushing river. I suppose it is the baffling ambiguity of this mediatorial status that leads the populace into its contradictory judgments. For if you take your stand at the one extreme, and assume that the college is a kind of genteel waiting club for a coming-out party, you will naturally be annoyed to discover that the student has already come

•HOWARD MUMFORD JONES, former dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University, is president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Portions of this paper were delivered recently as a Phi Beta Kappa address at Mt. Holyoke College.

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out, has ceased to wait, has become (perhaps prematurely) a participant in the social process, usually on the side most likely to distress his parents. But if you swing to the other pole, and argue that the only way to earn one's living is to begin earning it, and that the only way to live one's life is to begin living it, you will inevitably grow impatient with remote and theoretical instruction about the absolute, whether ablative or platonic.

In normal times these contradictions in the public view of the college do little harm. But we are not now living in a period in which contradictory criticisms can be held in easy balance. On the contrary, developments in public life threaten to warp or extinguish one of the most precious components of the college world. I refer, of course, to the field of politics, to the problem of freedom of action, and particularly to the relation of the young scholar to public opinion.

I begin by pointing out that as long as there have been universities, they have, as we say, "been in politics," sometimes violently. In the medieval world, students rioted for or against the king, the cardinal, the pope, the emperor, the Burgundians, the Armignacs, the nominalists or the realists. Much of this was mere ebullience, but much of it was also due to differences in outlook and philosophy similar to those which now divide mankind. To this day, particularly in countries where universities have an autonomous corporate life, they are likely to be swept by feverish political agitation. Recognizing this, governments have therefore often closed or tyrannically reorganized them. In Cuba, for example, the University of Havana has in the past been forced to shut down by particular governments; in Argentina, the dictator has "purged" academic faculties of every savant suspected of being opposed to his regime.

Nor is this tradition wholly alien to the Anglo-Saxon world. During the English Civil Wars, the University of Oxford was a stronghold of royalist sentiment, whereas the town was parliamentarian; under James II, the University resisted royal pressure to admit Catholics; and under the early Georges, it was annoyingly anti-Hanoverian. In Scotland, during the Reformation, the principal of one of the colleges composing the University of Aberdeen armed his students against the barons; and in Ireland, Trinity College, Dublin, was long

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a rallying point for the Protestant supremacy. Those who argue that institutions of higher learning improperly meddle in public questions have a good deal of historical explaining to do.

In the United States, college life has never mounted to these violent actions, albeit I think it would have been difficult to find an undergraduate of abolitionist sympathies at the University of South Carolina in the 1850's; whereas at Yale College in the same period, meetings were held and money was raised to send rifles to support righteousness in bleeding Kansas. In our own time, I doubt that a single Communist could be found among the boards of trustees or regents who are legally responsible for the conduct of our academic institutions; and I should not expect to find a socialist among them. I may add, parenthetically, that these boards do not include any proportionate representation of dirt farmers, of labor unions, of unskilled workers, or of women. And though I may seem momentarily to leave politics for sociology, it is evident that these governing boards represent, politically speaking, a closed system rather than an open one, and this fact inevitably affects college life.

For example, I doubt whether it is today possible, despite theories of academic freedom, to appoint an avowed Communist to any faculty, no matter how expert or brilliant he may be in his professional capacity. I further suspect that, as between two candidates of approximately equal merit, the one a socialist and the other belonging to a more conservative party, the socialist candidate would lose. I am also of the opinion at the moment that open advocacy of the views and the candidacy of Mr. Henry A. Wallace would be, in most cases, a liability for a young teacher seeking appointment in many institutions. Our colleges and universities are conservative institutions, often representing heavy financial investments, and like other aggregations of capital, they tend away from radical proposals—so much so that one is always mildly surprised to learn that our colleges are breeding grounds of communism or atheism or materialism or whatever happens to be the complaint of the hour.

But we must be fair to other facts. Trustees have come a long way since it was customary to dismiss professors for having unorthodox opinions. Colleges and universities have generally accepted the principle of academic freedom, which means that once you have exer-

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cised reasonable care in selecting a teacher of proved professional excellence, you are not thereafter to order what he is to do, so long as what he teaches violates no reasonable law. I say "reasonable law" because the law is not always reasonable; and in those cases where a legislature in its wisdom has ordered that the value of the ratio of the periphery of a circle to its diameter, or pi, shall be reckoned at 3 1/7, no scientist worth hiring but will insist that the ratio is an incommensurable quantity which no legislature can define.

Theoretically, and in many cases practically, academic freedom means that no professor loses his ordinary civic rights to support any cause, however unpopular, or to utter any opinion, however unorthodox, that he maturely desires to speak. It means also that he has gained no extraordinary right; that is, he has not acquired a special right, because he is a teacher, to advocate in the classroom any measure or point of view, however much he may be persuaded of its worth, unless what he advocates arises naturally out of the subject matter of the course and is part of its special or professional interest.

As I have indicated, there is unhappily good reason to suppose that faculty appointments are not always made for sheer merit. And there is, unfortunately also, a succession of complaints each year about a functional relation between failure of promotion and the advocacy of unpopular causes, just as from time to time cases of dismissal in violation of the principle of academic freedom occur, which the American Association of University Professors investigates. But by and large we have thrown a measure of protection around our faculties which they did not enjoy fifty years ago, and though I wish, in these hysterical times, that the protection were stronger, it exists and it helps. But the next question is: have we thrown any similar protection around the student? The answer is not easy, and the situation is complicated.

We may begin by imagining a college without any student activities whatsoever. This is not so impossible as it sounds, for the reason that seventeenth-century college life was of this order; indeed, Professor Albert Guérard, Sr., in his admirable autobiography, describes his years at the Collège Chaptal in Paris in the late nineteenth century as virtually without organized activities in the American sense of the word. Lack of these activities led to the frequent rebellions, barrings-

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out, and the like outbursts of animal vigor, such as putting the president's cow in the belfry, which make picturesque the early history of many famous American universities. Few of us would be content with such an institution; few of us but believe that no small part of our education has come from the sideshows, whatever part came from the main tent. Not to have athletic teams, debating societies, a college glee club, a dramatic association, and all the other organizations annually occupying their pages in the year book—why go to college, if one is not, in such activities, imitative of the outside world, gradually to learn how to live with human beings on terms at once of friendship and of rivalry?

We are so used to these components of college life that they are now regularly listed in the catalogue and featured in the advertising. But all this is recent. For example, in the single case of college dramatics, I may remind you that the theater was long regarded as the haunt of Satan; and though one can find students at William and Mary College producing a play early in the history of that famous school, faculty approval of worldly Broadway successes staged by undergraduates would have been unthinkable in Longfellow's time at Harvard. By and large, with some mild degree of faculty surveillance, provided these organizations meet their bills and create no scandal, students have won the unquestioned right to this sort of student activity.

They have won another right also, the significance of which is obscured by time. Every college has its Hillel Foundation, its Newman Club, its College Christian Association, and the like religious groups. When I remind you that the earliest lecture foundation at Harvard College had among its avowed aims an attack on the errors of the Church of Rome—an aim which the college has been allowed gracefully to set aside—you can imagine that in earlier, more militant days, the orthodox college would not have tolerated such centers of heresy. Indeed, even now, I think, Roman Catholic colleges (perhaps more consistent than the rest of us) though they welcome students of other faiths, do not encourage the formation on their campuses of heretical religious bodies.

The general notion that the college should encourage religious life without actively favoring one church or faith over another seems

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to most of us again—with one exception. Every now and then, some bright student or group of students bobs up with a plea for the recognition of atheism, on the logical ground that if we are not to discriminate among faiths, we should not discriminate against lack of faith—and then the fat is in the fire. The newspapers sound off; indignant alumni are heard from; the president is embarrassed; the faculty is either shocked or gleeful; and in the midst of this teapot tempest the society of atheists quietly disappears. The present difference between Methodist and Baptist is not, as it were, controversial—is rather what William James calls a dead option; whereas the difference between belief in God and belief that there is no God is controversial, arouses immediate passions, and is not only a live option but an option so lively as to engender more heat than light.

When the problem passes into the field of social action and of politics, the fighting grows fierce. We tolerate an economics club; shall we also tolerate a Marxist society? A student of sociology is encouraged to participate in social settlement work as part of his training; shall he be forbidden to picket a struck plant, even though his sense of justice has been outraged, and he is persuaded of the righteousness of the union cause? The campus acquires something called the Liberal Club, and nobody is disturbed; but dean after dean, president after president, has frowned upon the creation of a branch of American Youth for Democracy, alleged to be a Communist front. If President Harry Truman wants to make a speech to students, every college in the country is open to him, even though he is an avowed candidate to succeed himself; but we have seen Mr. Henry A. Wallace, also a candidate, forbidden to set foot on the sacred soil of this or that university, though other institutions have welcomed him. But would a Communist candidate for the presidency enjoy an equal privilege?

This year has seen the organization of student groups for or against Universal Military Training. If the law is passed, there will be small further need for organizations favoring it; but are organizations conscientiously opposed to it and sincerely desirous of its repeal therefore automatically to disappear? I remember as an illuminating parallel that so long as the eighteenth amendment was the law of the land, some college administrations would not countenance stu-

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dent organizations working for the repeal of prohibition. They feared, I suppose, that to tolerate them would give the college a reputation for drunkenness.

These practical problems arise if we are to take seriously Emerson's dictum that one of the principal aims of scholarship is action—that is, responsible participation in the life of the state. For we cannot act only in those areas that are without controversy. If scholarship is a public responsibility, that responsibility must be discharged by illuminating issues, and issues have an awkward habit of being highly controversial. I do not say that the young scholar is to plunge into a row on the theory that any row is educational; but I do suggest that, once you admit the right of the student to use life for his laboratory (and that is what we do in the college dramatic society, or the college settlement house, or a dozen other conventionally accepted activities), you cannot, without being arbitrary or casuistical, put some other area of normal human activity completely out of bounds. So true is this general principle that when, some years ago, the president of a great state university dismissed certain students for participating in a strike in a nearby city, he had the grace to be embarrassed by his action—for he had just recently made a speech encouraging students to participate in social settlement work in that very same metropolis.

Thus far, the line of my inquiry seems to carry me into the position of tolerating any kind of campus group, provided that the purposes are lawful and that the organization accepts continuing responsibility for its own actions. Perhaps in the long run this may be the wisest position to take. Certainly, if one compares the minute regulations governing college life in 1825, with the current policy which wisely throws responsibility upon a self-governing student body, we seem to have moved in the direction of the principle just enunciated. Of course, somebody is always threatening to cut the college out of his will if such-and-such a group or professor or action is longer tolerated, but most of us think that a college which yields to this kind of blackmail has lost its liberal franchise; and in my time as a teacher, although I constantly heard that this or that institution is a hotbed of atheism, communism, infidelity, free love, or something else, I have seen college enrollments constantly increase, college budgets con-

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tinually grow, and college expenditures steadily climb. A college whose alumni are capable of bringing pressures of this sort upon it has obviously failed to teach these alumni what is meant by either tolerance or inquiry.

But this is over-simplification, and the situation is complex. In the first place, the campus is not the world, and the undergraduate has not always reached his majority. We distinguish between freshmen (or freshmen and sophomores) and upper-classmen; and the courts, whether one likes it or not, uniformly hold that college authorities have the duty of acting *in loco parentis*—that is, of regulating student life in the public interest. And in the second place, although some sort of student body is always present, the individual student is a bird of passage in the life of the institution. Therefore, when you throw responsibility upon a faculty, you throw it upon a body which changes slowly; but when you throw responsibility upon the undergraduates, you sometimes build upon dissolving sand.

Moreover, although it is no discredit to any college generation not to know that burning campus issues today are singularly like burning campus issues yesterday—so that, from the faculty point of view, current debates in the school paper are a kind of echolalia, and one begins to define education as the recurring discovery of the obvious by the untrained—there is a sense in which crabbed age and youth will never see eye to eye in any vital issue of college law. Youth is quite willing to throw its body by the wall if only the forts of folly will fall a little sooner; age and experience incline to the point of view that, though frontal attack may do very well as drama, the slower process of seige and occupation wins surer victory. And always there are pressures from the outside, and pent-up emotions within. Why shouldn't the Communists organize on the campus? Why should the Communists organize? Why not compel the Southern states to grant full educational opportunity to Negroes? Why compel them to do so? Are you for Wallace? Are you for Eisenhower? Are you for peace? Are you for UMT? Are you for education? Are you for democracy?

If we try to work our way through this maze of convention, prejudice, timidity, custom, selfish interest, and idealistic belief in truth, we can, I think, establish one or two general principles to guide us. The first of these is one which everybody will grant. Studies are

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primary; the college is entirely right in insisting that they are primary; and the faculty is in duty bound to require the student to subordinate his other activities to the work of the college *qua* college. I think it is also right to insist that this intellectual labor shall be regularly and consistently done. I would not trouble the reader with this obvious truth, were it not a principle that students constantly violate in fact. Who does not know the student so wrapped up in the college play that she neglects all daily chores, waits until two days before an examination, crams all night, and presents herself next day in the classroom, filled with coca cola, caffeine, anxiety, and a parrot's knowledge of the course This is simply bad citizenship, and no plea of burning interest, artistic zeal, or self-development has any standing in the court.

But is there any difference between this kind of irresponsible fanaticism and the irresponsible fanaticism of the young Marxist, who buttonholes the instructor in economics, reads class warfare into *Hamlet*, sums up the curriculum as bourgeois culture, and in the same breath demands that the college shall protect his sacred egoism whenever he wants to wave a red flag in front of the Wall Street bulls? The college has the duty to protect liberal education against misuse in this sense; and since maturation is an essential element in this education, it has a right to protect itself against students and against organizations which, as it were, interfere with or deny the need of regular work, of steady growth, of a deliberate slowing down of judgment until enough facts are in to warrant decision.

I suggest that the difficulty in the case of various student organizations left of center is not that they are radical, but that they are counter-educational—that is, by the very nature of their being, they deny the validity of that liberal process of reflection upon organized truth to which the college is committed. An informed Communist has my intellectual respect; the difficulty with misinformed Communists is not that they are Communists, but that they are not informed, and, on the whole, seem rather to fear information than to welcome it. I incline therefore to believe that college authorities are justified in inquiring of any student activity applying for recognition whether its real purpose is propaganda or intelligent action. Intelligent action is in the line of liberal training, whereas propaganda as such is a de-

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liberate denial of the educational process, since its avowed purpose is to close the mind to any point of view save one.

A second consideration seems to me valid in this field, and this is that the college has the right to require the student to make up his mind whether he intends to be treated as an adult or as a minor. This may surprise, inasmuch as the courts theoretically require the college to assume parental responsibility; but in another area and in a different way I think I can make clear what I mean. Any dean of men knows that one of his behind-the-scene jobs is to get students out of trouble —for speeding, for drunkenness, for riot, for rubber checks, for practical jokes, for this, that or the other. The student started out bravely as an adult, but when he faced the police court he suddenly discovered that he was only an undergraduate and hastily telephoned the dean—not his father or mother, but the dean. And the dean obliged, for the very practical reason that he wanted to keep the name of the college out of the yellow press. But here the student plays both ends against the middle; he demands all the rights of the adult, and all the privileges of being a minor.

I think a good many student organizations demand in fact the same ambivalent privilege. If I may go back to the time of the Ptolemies, my class in college failed to pay the printer's bill for the college annual; and one of my jobs when I was a dean was to inquire of a student organization whether, like Mr. and Mrs. Rawdon Crawley, it proposed to live on its creditors forever. If we are to acquit ourselves like men and women, let us establish responsible organizations, pay our bills, live up to our promises, and remember that as students we are as much citizens of the college as the president or the faculty. Let us also behave like civilized members of a great republic, and not raid each other's meetings, interrupt speakers with catcalls, or insult orators we do not happen to like by playing crude practical jokes and then pleading that we were only undergraduates, after all. We cannot simultaneously claim the immunity given children and the respect due to serious manhood and womanhood. If college authorities have sometimes quibbled about the right of students to take political or social action, students have occasionally wavered as to whether they are children or adults.

Probably there are other considerations, but if we grant that

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campus organizations may be lawfully required to lead into the general purpose of a liberal education rather than away from it, and if the group seeking a franchise gives adequate proof that its purpose is dignified and its membership responsible, then I think students have a right to demand of the college protection from outside (or for that matter, inside) interference comparable to that included under the principle of academic freedom.

By this I mean that any lawful meeting should not be broken up, as sometimes happens in men's colleges; that speakers appropriate to the purpose of the organization may be secured, whether their views are pleasing or not to the president or the majority, and protected in their right to speak; and that the life of the organization and the academic careers of its members shall not be threatened or cut short by unfavorable publicity, alumni pressure, the belief of some college benefactor that the younger generation is being led astray, the assaults of the pulpit or of business or of parents or of any other of the customary forces exerting pressures upon opinion.

I am further of opinion that in those colleges where self-government is established, students should share with the faculty the responsibility for chartering organizations and for protecting them in their rights and holding them to their responsibilities. And in view of the fact that I have nowhere discovered any student code comparable to the code of the American Association of University Professors governing faculty life, I believe that an appropriate national body, such as the Association of American Colleges, should begin studying and formulating such a code, to which both sides, in any dispute, could appeal.

For if the life of the college is life somewhat purified of its grosser pressures, so that experimentation can be carried on more safely within college walls than without; and if it is important in the democratic state for men to learn to differ without emotional violence; and if we truly believe that action is one of the ends of scholarship —that is, action considered as informed participation in public life —I am led irresistibly to the conclusion that student organizations cannot stop this side of controversial issues, but must learn how to subdue controversy to enlightened action. And I am led also to the belief that the college campus is one of the few places left in the

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world in which we can carry on, as it were, a laboratory exercise in the democracy of public life.

Last May some twenty-six students, members of the local chapter of the AYD, applied for recognition at Harvard. They were so recognized, and a storm of protest broke. Dean Buck issued two sentences which I wish could be engraved in bronze and hung in every administrative office of our colleges. They were short and to the point. He said: "We are aware of statements which have been made about Communist influence in the American Youth for Democracy. Our policy, however, is based upon a faith in the ability of the American form of government to prove its value in the free market of ideas."

If we do not believe in the free market of ideas, if we do not believe that, given equal opportunity and no favor, the free market in ideas and the democratic way of life can win out against other markets and other ways of life, I see little point to the liberal college.

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Melancholy on a Hill

Stewart H. Holbrook

THIS HILL, my great-great-grandfather had said, produces the best maple honey in Vermont and the biggest supply of material for stone fences you could imagine. He always had a plenty of the one, and far too much of the other. When he went there, a little after the end of the Revolution, with the truly appalling idea of clearing a farm in the forest, the entire hill was silent with the immense hush of an illimitable wilderness.

Now, a century and a half later, the silence is returning, along with the wilderness that is marching from the edges of the old fields and pastures straight across and up and down, swallowing the miles of stone fences, tearing the pasture gate off its hinges, advancing to the barn to break its ribs and arriving, at last, at the very slab of granite that served as doorstep, while the house itself, with a few decaying apple trees and a bush of lavender, is about to be crushed, then wholly obliterated, along with the rest of a typical hill farm of the Green Mountain State.

Jonus Galusha is a pretty good governor—said my great-great-grandfather, who read the *Montpelier Watchman* and kept up with affairs—a pretty good governor, but he has no idea how many goddam rocks we have to pick in order to plant buckwheat, to pay taxes with. The old gentleman was seldom profane, except when discussing the War of 1812, or taxes of any sort. . . .

A sociologist may be alarmed at the return of the wilderness to so many hill farms in New England. A forester, on the other hand, might be pleased, and remark it is time and past for the wilderness to reclaim its own—that the hills of New England are suited only

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to the growing of trees. But to him who has lived on a Vermont hill, the matter of abandonment contains something other than alarm for coldly social reasons, or joy at the covering of the exhausted soil with handsome white birch and fragrant balsam. To him comes a sadness that has nothing to do with sociology or economics, but stems from some deep and imperfectly understood emotion about his own kind of people—namely, Yankees of the oldest stock. When the hill farms began reverting to forest, or worse, to foreigners called city folks, New England's great day had passed. Her Yankees were on the move—either westward, or into a Congregational Valhalla where God provided buckwheat cakes with maple honey at every meal, and angels who looked like a cross-fertilization of Henry Ward Beecher and Anne Hutchinson read snatches from the Good Book.

Even as late as my boyhood, early this century, the farms on this hill all were occupied, and the district school filled every term. The desks were the same our fathers and mothers had used, and so, too, were many of the textbooks. We learned that Ethan Allen and George Washington, working in splendid cooperation, had fought and won the Revolutionary War; and that the stomach of even a mild toper turned a hideous purple just before delirium tremens mercifully struck down and removed the besotted sinner.

I stood by the deserted schoolhouse on a fine September day recently, and looked in four directions. In every quarter, I saw abandoned farms. One small family now lived precariously on this entire hill, where once the soil had supported seven families—able to muster fifty-six persons for a picnic or a funeral.

Lilacs still grew in the schoolyard, and surrounded the tumbledown outhouse. The feeble grass grew high in the field, but it was thin and juiceless, not worth the mowing; and balsam and birch were stalking in from all sides. Was the field symbolic? I wondered. Was this woebegone grass, where timothy had once grown head-high and strong—was this grass a symbol of the Yankees? Were the birches and balsams taking over the tired land just as foreigners of all kinds had been taking over New England?

Why did they leave this New Canaan where they had tamed the savage forest and learned to live with the savage weather? They had piled enough stone to build a tower higher than Babel's in the

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land of Shinar. They had sent bale upon bale of wool, in oxcarts, 200 miles overland to Portland; and although on this hill God did not temper the wind to the shorn lamb, their lambs survived winter in surprising numbers. Their women spun yarn in prodigious amounts.

They hauled their spruce to the banks of the Connecticut, then drove it, like madmen chasing phantoms, down the heaving stream to the mills at Mount Tom in Massachusetts—sixty days and nights to the south.

They tapped the great maples by slashing the trunk and placing a birch-bark lunkin under the slash. Then they boiled the sap outdoors, holding a hunk of fat pork on a long stick, ready to immerse the greasy meat, should the kettle start to boil over. They used the product on their tables, and what was left they sold, in prosperous times, for five cents a pound; or they traded it for a little salt, or even less of cream of tartar. And seemingly to hasten the day of reckoning, when the big kettle was not boiling sap, they used it to make potash from the trees they felled and burned. The potash went to Portland, through the perilous Notch of Dixville, and a round trip meant a month gone.

Why did they leave this New Canaan they had worked so hard to fashion to their needs?

Where did they go, these Yankees who deserted the hills of Vermont and five other strongholds of a people who are said, at least by other Americans, to be flinty of character, chary of emotion, careful of money, and shrewd as can be?

What did they do when they got to where they were going, these strange Yankees who were as filled with yeasty ideas as they were with inventions of machines and gadgets? I am thinking of the kind of people who could and did form a *Vegetarian* Emigrating Society and head for Kansas; or who could and did conjure up Mormonism, Perfectionism, Christian Science—and in their lighter moments invented the friction match, the steam calliope, the normal school, the dollar watch, and horsehair furniture.

Not all of them went away, of course. A few remained, some to devise and build in New Hampshire the Concord coach that carried men and the mails across the Great American Desert and so up and

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over the Rockies. Mr. Colt went no further than Hartford, where he manufactured his revolving firearm that was used to liquidate Indians and Mexicans, and to hold up the steamcars in Iowa and Missouri. Mr. Estey stopped short in Vermont's Brattleboro, there to make the little organs that went into the covered wagons, to be played in Congregational and Methodist bethels of Oregon and the tented saloons and whorehouses of the Mother Lode. Up in Maine, too, Joe Peavey, inspired by watching river-drivers break a log jam, went back to his little smithy in Stillwater and there and then forged the first Improved Cantdog or Peavey, the tool that was to roll untold millions of logs into the Saginaw, the Chippewa, the St. Croix, and so on into Idaho. Even the Yankees who stayed at home had thus a vast influence on the American West.

No, not all of the Yankees went away. But by 1860, almost a half of them had gone. Nor was this greatest migration of native Americans done. It has continued into the middle of the twentieth century.

As recently as 1916, I had mowed with a hand scythe, here on Reed's Flat, where a field ranged both banks of the Mill Brook, and whetted my blade on a stone quarried by the Pike Family in New Hampshire. Thirty years later, the only mowing done on Reed's Flat was done with ax and saw. For there the spruces were standing thick and tall, and the pulp loggers were at them in force. The axes were now no longer ground on Pike Family whetstones, for the Pikes have disappeared into the maw of a gigantic corporation perpetrated, I suspect, by non-Yankees. As for the spruce sticks, they would go either to Berlin or Groveton to be made into a product called cellophane, which only too many Americans seem to consider a wonderful symbol of Progress.

Perhaps it is Progress, too, for there are so many ways of measuring imponderables as to bemuse a man who sees only that his own people went away and left their fields to grow into forests. I can wonder, too, if the slick, bright packages protected by cellophane contribute as much of importance to the Republic as a hill-farm family, who in four generations fed and clothed themselves, schooled themselves, paid taxes, sent sons to three wars and to help found a dozen states, sent daughters to six normal schools, and asked the government, in

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all that long period, for little more than a bounty on wolves and bears.

The old house has fared no better than the fields. Its faded red paint is mellow in a September sun. Wasps whine in and out of their paper home under the ridge-pole. The dustily opaque panes of the windows would shock any New England housewife; yet they serve to obscure sight of rooms that are more shocking than dusty panes. Here was the parlor, its hand-carved molding still hugging tightly the walls, but one wall is now reeling outward, revealing both lath and plaster. The fireplace is half filled with crumbling bricks and the remains of a fire that was kindled when James Madison was president, and went out during Wilson's last administration.

Here by tallow dip, by candle, then by lamp, but never by mazda, four generations read the *Watchman*, or the *Springfield Republican*, or the *Boston Globe*, and studied textbooks and the old *Farmer's Almanac* that warned of winds and snows and assorted storms, but was fatuous in admonishing a Vermont hill farmer to see that *his* woodshed was filled to the rafters.

Here were weddings which often took the pair of them to Buffalo, or Beloit, or Topeka, or even to Oregon, a land well beyond the moon. And funeral services for bodies that still lay along Antietam Creek, at San Juan, and in the woods of the Argonne. On occasion this parlor must have shook to the awful doom emanating with the words of Adventist preachers, and the seductive calls of the earnest young men from the State of Deseret, which had been founded by a fellow Vermonter born in Whitingham. . . .

They all came to call on their fellow Vermonters—the Dorrilites, the Perfectionists, the Christians (from nearby Lyndon); the anti-Masons, the anti-nicotine forces, the Temperance shouters, the hydro-therapists, the anti-calomel men, the hosts of assorted Sabbitarians, the sellers of lightning rods. So, also, the Abolitionists, the Friends of Liberia, the vegetarians, the Grahamites, the Tomsonites, the homeopaths.

And when times became dreadfully hard, and Yankees in their desperation started to make gadgets for sale to other Yankees—because they had no other market—this house resounded to the heralds of tin calf-weaners and Seth Thomas' clocks, of mouth organs and patent water witches, of soapstone stoves and Thayer's Slippery Elm

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Lozenges. Once, at least, came a persuasive man who sold mulberry bushes, complete with worms, on which, he vowed, any hill farmer could make a fortune from silk.

Meanwhile, too, in this savage clime where man worked hard and long to earn his keep, Temperance and only Temperance, of all the New Ideas, seemed to take hold on the farms and retain its grip. I wonder seriously how many bottles of varied elixirs gurgled away in this kitchen—bottles of Dr. Herrick's Liver & Blood Invigorator, of Dr. Perry Davis' Pain Killer, of Green's August Flower, and Boschee's German Syrup. No matter the alcohol they contained—it was never mentioned on the labels, and thus generations of Temperance males and females were able to look upon both the times and the weather with more equanimity than they otherwise could have mustered, and at the same time keep the faith. All praise be to good Dr. Herrick and good Dr. Davis and the rest—that is, all save Dr. Joseph Walker, a perverse person who came out with Walker's Vinegar Bitters, Free from All Alcoholic Stimulants. . . . What little balm had been left in Gilead was dissolved and ran away in the wry and non-soothing bitters of the anti-social Dr. Walker.

There were, of course, births in this or that bedroom, and the Bible was thumbed to name the results—who, bearded or otherwise when grown, sounded like all the prophets and heroes of the Old Testament, together with their wives and concubines and sons and daughters. And when biblical names gave out, or wore thin from use, the heroes of the American republic came in: Jethro lies in Ohio soil, near Oberlin; Solomon drove his stakes in Northfield, Minnesota. Sally Ann got only as far as Cattaraugus in western New York. It was Rufus they covered up on a bank of Antietam Creek. Amos simply went away and was never heard of again. Abijah went to Cripple Creek to work for Mr. Tabor, who came from nearby Orleans County, Vermont. Ethan took no forts but instead, the fever, and died somewhere in a surveying crew of the Santa Fe railroad, which was being built by Mr. Strong of Brownington, Vermont.

Jerusha went to tending spindles in Mr. Lawrence's brand new heaven in Massachusetts called Lowell, where Jerusha's morals and the morals of uncounted other Yankee maidens were tended as carefully as the spindles; and they got, and probably earned, two dollars

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a week for preserving their virginity and at the same time making the finest cloth in all New Canaan. But not a great deal was done about protecting the maidens from the machines, and many a Yankee girl who had pretty fingers lost one or more in Lowell.

Sharon was the real traveler. She worked her way through the new normal school at Lexington, near Boston, then in one great leap landed in Beloit, to teach the youngsters of that rising town a much broader A than was commonly heard in Wisconsin. From Beloit Sharon went on, this time to Burlington, Iowa; and still again when the cars crossed the plains, into California, where she closed her life drilling multiplication tables into the heads of children of Southern Pacific employes, a railroad project that had been carried out by three Yankees and one foreigner from Troy, New York. Lucy and Deborah also taught school, in Kansas, where they married two other transplanted Vermonters and demonstrated that Yankee women were far from sterile.

Some of these far-ranging Yankee girls doubtless carried a sprig or two of this same old lavender bush, now struggling amid the encroaching forest, in their linen, as they moved westward. And perhaps a flower from this climbing rose, that will soon be done. I know that Yankees in far places often yearned for a taste of the wry fruit on these so-called native apple trees. The fruit was never else than hard and tart, but it contained a mystic flavor for which, apparently, there was no substitute. So, small boxes of these bullets of apples went in the wake of the migrating Yankees, to be eaten in the lush paradise of California and to the great scandal of most Californians. Quite often the Yankees carried with them their ideas of government and managed, in spite of Kentucky statutes, to impose in Illinois the township system throughout the state. With modifications they did the same to or for Michigan, and also installed the whipping post in words taken from Vermont's original laws. When Wisconsin was carved out of Michigan, Yankees poured in so fast as to dominate politics, supplying eight of that state's first eighteen governors and seven of its early United States senators.

In their trunks, as they moved westward, went bottles of favorite patent medicines, and in their mores went the idea of salvation by works—sometimes only another name for intolerance. In Anoka,

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Minnesota, founded largely by men of Maine—the first Prohibition state—the new Empire saloon was soon raided by a vigilante group, and all the excellent liquor spilled. It was at this period that James Madison Goodhue, late of Hebron, New Hampshire, and Amherst 1833, who was putting out Minnesota's first newspaper, wrote with grim satisfaction that Minnesota was "destined to become the New England of the West." The James-Younger gang discovered what *that* meant when, in what turned out to be their supreme moment of disaster, they attempted to rob the Yankee bank in Yankee Northfield. . . .

No, there was little use in fighting back the brush on this hill—not when Yankees were shooting robbers in Minnesota, building railroads in Texas, founding colleges in Iowa and Oregon, cutting a swath of timber to Puget Sound. Only a few of them came back. In this attic is still a brass-studded trunk that once upon a time went to Omaha. Francis Holbrook took it there, and thought he was going to homestead a quarter-section. He soon returned home. "I never," he said, "saw such a damnable country in all my life. The farmers live in sod huts and even when they have winders, they can't see nothing."

But Francis did not stay on this hill. He moved to a river farm, and thus became a part of the inner-migration that went on for a hundred years. "The gods of the valleys are not the gods of the hills," Ethan Allen remarked on a famous occasion, yet thousands of hill Yankees changed their gods for a valley farm.

Behind the kitchen door, here, there once sat upon the floor, as a doorstop, a great pink and white conch shell which was used daily to announce that the sun, or at least the Seth Thomas clock, had reached meridian, and it was time for dinner. My great-grandmother and my great aunts, so I am told, would pick up this same shell, step to the granite slab at the door, and wind a trump that was heard in the far corner of the field, that was heard in the Back Forty, that was heard—on a quiet day—across five farms, two brook valleys, and halfway up Monadnock mountain—a great, long, gusty, booming and mellow note, deep and vibrant as the lowest note of an organ. It was a note to stop an ax in mid-air, to arrest the stroke of a scythe in the wheat.

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In that tremendous low-pitched blast was also the quality of assurance. Here was no squeal, no irritating treble, no pleading, but the hoarse booming note of authority, bidding all who heard it to note that God had been pleased to pass His sun across the meridian once more and to tell the menfolk, and anyone else who heard it, they had best be spry and prompt, in the orderly manner of Yankees. No bell, no whistle, no siren ever carried such assurance, such urgency, or, I repeat, such authority.

There is no telling when the note of the conch shell was last heard on this hill. Were it blown today, its solemn tone would be heard, possibly, by four persons, five cows, a horse, a dog, and perhaps, in season, by a hunter or two following the old beech ridge, looking for bear.

Is there such a thing as an accumulated memory, a sort of inheritance, by which a people, removed for generations from their source, can recognize instinctively, and by no other process, a sight or a sound that was important to their forebears? If there is, I should be tempted to ask some radio network man to come, on a hot day in August, to this hill farm and set up his paraphernalia on the granite doorstep. Then, I should persuade a middle-aged relative of mine, who is said to look like Great-grandmother, to pick up the great pink and white conch and wind a long note, fair into the microphone.

How would that note echo in Greybull, Wyoming; in Beloit, Wisconsin; in Bemidji, Walla Walla, Modesto, and Coffeyville? Would listeners here and there—men and women who had never been on this hill and perhaps never in New England—would they instantly conjure up the breathless heat of August on a hill farm, so near the sun, and hear the cicadas at their last sad farewell to summer, with an obbligato of tinkling bells of sheep in pasture? Could they hear the slow, steady swish of scythes, one following the other to the end of the swath, and the creak of the hayrick moving from tumble to tumble? Would something deep in their blood remember something they had never seen, or perhaps never heard of, and bring before their Western eyes a small calicoed woman, ringletted, sharp-eyed, sharp-featured, her bosom rising, then slowly falling as the conch shell in her hand gave out its melancholy warning that a Yankee God had brought noontime again? Would the lingering echo

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of the note exert in far places a pull, an uneasy tug, that could be explained in no rational manner?

It might. It would matter little, anyway, except perhaps as an experiment toward assessing the influence of heredity. It would matter little because this hill—as many another hill in the six Yankee commonwealths—has long since passed its meridian. The conch shell sounded, for many of these hills, as long ago as 1830, and as recently as 1940 for others. But it has sounded for them all, and they are no longer of importance, unless as summer homes for city folks, or for the purpose which Nature intended them, for the growing of forests. Blow, Jerusha . . . Blow, Sharon . . . Blow, Sally Ann. They may hear an echo of your shell in far places. It will be faint, certainly, but those who understand what they hear in its low vibrations will cherish the sound. They will recognize it as the terminal note of a great composition fashioned by restless and highly mobile Yankees to the glory of the Republic.

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The Statue

Rolfe Humphries

Short, husky, black and brown with dust and sweat,
The quarry men, whose bar and sledge have pried
The marble loose, stand back to watch it drawn
Down the rough skidroad from the mountainside,

Out of its first exposure, heading toward
A new erosion, where a mind, an eye,
And something called imagination, wait
To wear it down, before the hands dare try

To grasp and lift the chisel and the maul—
One man's complete employment now—observe
How stone is dressed in nakedness, how steel
With sharp straight edge brings out the bevelled curve.

One man does this, who stops at times, and frowns,
Or hums himself a little tune, that goes
(When all goes well), *The more the marble wastes,*
The more it wastes, the more the statue grows.

Finished, at last (he thinks), and sold, and set
In some appropriate spot, a colonnade
Or Syracusan grove, where oranges
Are balls of sun among the clouds of shade.

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Here, like its owner's fortune, just a trace
Too new for dignity, the statue stands,
Almost a masterpiece, requiring still
Some final touch, the work of other hands.

And these are given; wind and rain and sun
And time and weather, infinitely slow,
Patient through generations, waste and wear,
Correct the marble, make the figure grow,

So that tradition, anciency, and grace
Are added by subtraction, and the pure
Symbol from image forms, along whose base
Runs the new rune—*See how our works endure.*

Endure, disintegrate, and, even beyond
Disintegration, live in long renown:
After the vandals come, lop off the limbs,
Hack at the head and helmet, topple down

The mutilated torso, drag it off
Aboard a ship, to cast it in the seas;
Granted its last perfection, men recall
Its glory in one word—Praxiteles.

•ROLFE HUMPHRIES' latest book of verse, *Forbid Thy Ravens,* was published last fall.

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Mass Media and the Engineering of Consent

Joseph T. Klapper

NOT PARTICULARLY original or deliberately designed, the title of this article arose spontaneously during an informal luncheon. Neither the social scientist nor the mental hygienist nor either of the two untitled liberals present questioned the phrase. Twenty-five years ago, the expression would have been meaningless. Today, even to such semantic quibblers as sat at the luncheon table, the phrase clearly reflected two gnawing anxieties common to contemporary American society—or at least to that part of American society which prides itself upon its critical social spirit. For all persons professionally or avocationally concerned with other people's attitudes, the fear of propaganda and the fear of mass media are imposing bogeys.

The fear of propaganda has become a familiar of the American household, and has been institutionalized—both in our grade schools, and in foundations guided by scholars heavy with advanced degrees. The child is taught that any words issuing from foreign lands may well be calculated to mislead, and the communication analysts seek to safeguard the laymen by throwing into conspicuous relief the dangerous laws and processes of persuasion.

Yet, for all the concern it currently inspires, propaganda—or, if you will, the engineering of consent—is nothing new, nor is its use

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A part of the title of this article, ". . . the Engineering of Consent," has been used as a title at least twice before. A book by Peter B. Odegard and Allen E. Helms, *American Politics: A Study in Political Dynamics* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938), includes two chapters (XVII and XVIII) entitled, "The Engineering of Consent," and an article under the same title by Edward L. Bernays appeared in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (March, 1947), Vol. 250, pp. 113-120.

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confined to persons of sinister intent. Whoever seeks in any way to change another's mind, or to have him think in a certain way, is attempting, whether ill or well, to engineer consent. The artist who records his interpretation of a tree is suggesting an attitude, and so laying the foundation of consent. And a notable portion of every person's daily converse is directed toward propagandistic ends.

Nor can it be said that attempts to influence opinion are cause for concern only when directed upon values. Sanctioned and applauded engineering of consent is daily directed upon the most basic values of life. Education is said to be distinguished from propaganda by its aims: propaganda is defined as an attempt to engineer consent, while education is said to train the observer to find the facts, so that he may make a free decision. Actually, education is hardly so objective. It presents facts as the educators see them, and both the educators and the educational system are products and purveyors of a culture defined in terms of social norms. Even the professor of literature, who may be politically nonpartisan, nurtures a traditional and rather unobjective interpretation of what makes literature good or bad. The philosopher is even more clearly engaged in the engineering of consent. Of us all who seek to place Truth before the endangered masses, there is not one who can answer the jesting Pilate, except to say "This is a social norm in which I believe."

Propaganda, in short, appears wherever there are two unidentical minds and a means of communication. These are the simple necessary and sufficient conditions for an attempt to engineer consent. The current fear of propaganda is perhaps not ill-founded, but it is inexactly expressed. For what the guardians of the free mind really fear is not the engineering of consent, but rather that the engineering will be so successful as to bar the conditions for opposing engineering. The goal perilous is not consent, but unanimity. And it is because the true nature of the danger is felt, if not often articulated, that mass media of communication are so often seen as contributory demons.

"Mass media," as everyone has somehow come to know, is a term applied to those media of communication which reach the great majority—at times almost the whole of the national population. As used by social psychologists, the term is commonly taken to refer to

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radio, film and press, which is in turn taken to mean newspapers and the more inexpensive, nationally popular magazines. Other media or products, in particular the comic book, are likewise mass media of a sort; but because they are patronized mainly by a limited portion of the population (comic books, for example, by about 90 per cent of all children between six and fourteen), they are hardly the social equivalents of the real giants of communication.

The figures behind the word "mass" are always startling, even to the specialist, but need not be here repeated in any detail. Suffice it to say that somewhere between 40 and 50 million people will today purchase a daily newspaper, and that many of them will pass it on to a family or to commuting companions. Some 100 million people will today spend at least an hour listening, whether attentively or desultorily, to one or more of the 2000-odd radio stations reaching across the American air. About one-third of the population will go to the movies at least once before the week is out.

It is precisely because these media of communication reach what to all intents and purposes amounts to the entire population, that they inspire such fear among persons concerned with the national social welfare. Never before in the history of the world, the fearful point out, has any such means of mass communication existed. Never before, they therefore conclude, has public opinion lain so completely at the mercy of whoever may be in control of the instrument.

The nature of that control in the United States has increased and specified the concern. Directly or indirectly, American mass media is controlled by big business, and among social therapists big business is traditionally and perhaps indissolubly associated with exploitation. Although direct physical exploitation may be difficult under existing laws, the worried ones fear that big business is now possessed of the supreme instrument for engineering consent and thus for practicing psychological exploitation.

The conventional sympathy between big business and machine politics, and the obvious reflection of machine views in the popular press, suggest to the democrat and the liberal that with the aid of mass media the forces of reaction might engineer consent for a rightist totalitarianism. Others see similar dangers threatening from the left. The effective use of mass media by a totalitarian state is re-

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garded as confirmation of their dangers. The fear that mass media may engineer an unfortunate consent is expressed not only in the Congressional investigation of Hollywood, but also in the editorial columns of other mass media, in the streets, and even by more clear-headed social observers. Thus, Mahonri Sharp Young, writing of radio in the recent Spring issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, asserts:

> Politically, a lever of frightening efficiency has been devised; new techniques of mass persuasion are being designed to manipulate a supposedly spontaneous public opinion. The existence of radio's influence can hardly be doubted. Argument occurs only over its extent and depth.

Lyman Bryson, replying to Mr. Young's argument, makes no comment on this point. It is apparently generally felt, even among social scientists, that a behemoth is upon us.

II

Students of mass communication and of public opinion may, however, be somewhat puzzled by the omissions in Mr. Young's definition of the field of argument. Is there no room for argument over the area of operation within which radio's influence is so frighteningly efficient? If the extent and depth of that influence are limited, as the occurrence of argument would suggest, then why should it be assumed that this influence will flourish comfortably in every mental soil?

Cool and careful research in fact suggest that the limitations upon the influence of mass media, especially in the United States, are considerable, and that these limitations are partly due to the very aspects of mass media which inspire the greatest concern: commercial sponsorship and the resultant necessity of pleasing as many people as possible.

The controlling interests of American mass media are giants indigenous to a specific social and economic system. They are not likely to seek, and have in fact rarely sought, to accomplish any revolutionary change in the system which provides them with their abundant sustenance. They have rather exerted their influence to intensify and mold certain existing tendencies of that system, to nur-

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ture already-sanctioned attitudes, and to sharpen them in such a way as to produce a specific overt action: the purchase of soap, coffee, gasoline or a service.

The influence of big business on the content of mass media is probably not exerted in any large conscious Gestalt designed to perpetuate a social system. The conscious and manifest purpose of a radio program sponsor is primarily, and almost wholly, to sell his soap. Although the maintenance of the existing social and economic system may be a precondition of the sale, such social guardianship is, for the usual sponsor, at most a secondary and latent purpose—except in the face of direct attack. Direct statements to the effect that this is the best of all possible systems occur only occasionally in the press, and very rarely in films or over the air. The commercial interests rather devote themselves, in the mass media, to direct appeals designed to sell their product. For the rest, they provide entertainment or news, as the traditions of the media may dictate. However the finances are arranged, big business foots the bill, and mass media provide a substantial amount of news and entertainment, which serves in the main to support a comparatively small but frank advertising content.

Of this advertising and its effectiveness, there is little to be said. The process is a deliberate engineering of a highly specific consent, and it is often highly successful. The specific appeals and the specific successes are in themselves of no great social importance, but rather reflect more general basic attitudes, which in turn inspire the anxiety of the clear-thinking social scientists. Whether the audience buys one gasoline or another is of no social consequence. The more proper object of social investigation is the fact that the audience believes that one company's gasoline is better than another, or that it makes no protest against the trivial content and the often massive flow of commercial appeal.

Such tolerance or approval is peculiarly necessary to the successful specific appeals, but for such consent big business institutes no obvious engineering. Commercials in favor of commercials are never heard over the air, but still the climate of audience opinion remains unwaveringly beneficent. A potent influence toward this more basic consent, and to a still wider and thus more frightening consent, stems

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not from these relatively brief and deliberate appeals, but rather from the far more numerous hours of entertainment.

III

Not that the entertainment or news content of mass media is ordinarily outright or even intentional propaganda. An occasional radio speech may inveigh against communism, editorial columns may provide their daily bit of advice, and at election time the propaganda content may be stepped up considerably. But if the time or space devoted to all such frank attempts to influence opinion is set against the total time or space devoted to news and entertainment, the direct propaganda content is statistically insignificant. The overwhelming portion of mass media's total product is devoted to drama or narrative of one or another sort, to music, to news, and to that comparatively newborn child, the audience participation show. Practically none of this is deliberately propagandistic. Yet the greatest part of it works toward a consent so extensive and so blind as to justify completely the fears of social scientists. This unhappily wide consent derives directly from the two previously mentioned and interlocked characteristics of American mass media: commercial control and the resultant need to please the largest possible audience.

Pleasing the majority necessarily involves hewing to majority views. He who espouses minority opinion automatically alienates the majority; he who would immediately enlist the crowd must voice the attitude already sanctioned by most of its members. The business man who wishes to hold the largest possible audience through an hour or page of entertainment must see to it that the script or story expresses no attitudes with which any substantial number may disagree. The width of the requisite sanction depends directly on the degree of majority sought. Mass media, through which big business aims at unanimous good will, face and meet the simple demands of a nationally common denominator of attitudes. The more completely mass media content reasserts the existent social mores, the more efficiently does it serve its commercial purposes. To depart from the popularly sanctioned path is to invite economic disaster.

The same social mores, as we have remarked somewhat earlier,

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are precisely what must be maintained if big business is to enjoy a beneficent climate. And while big business rarely undertakes to use mass media in any deliberate reenforcement of social and economic attitudes, the giants of the system nevertheless recognize attacks. A soap manufacturer is not likely to use his radio time to preach the glories of capitalism, but he will object vociferously if the entertainment for which he is paying suggests that economic free enterprise is not, after all, so economical for the consumer.

Due both to the native predispositions of big business and to the pursuit of majority appeal, the entertainment content of mass media in this democracy continually reaffirms sanctioned attitudes. That the media do actually devote themselves almost exclusively to this end has been noted by both informal observers and rigidly scientific investigators. The general reaffirmation pattern has been pointed out by Paul F. Lazarsfeld in various papers. Bernard Berelson and Patricia Salter found that popular magazine stories, while overtly accepting the ideology of religious and racial equality, actually perpetuate stereotypes of minority groups, applaud the maintenance of caste lines, and picture a world where the highest income is reserved for white, American-born gentiles who practice the Protestant ethic. Leo Lowenthal has shown that biographies in popular magazines are essentially demonstrations that the current hero has been since birth an embodiment of popularly sanctioned values. In less scientific but equally acute key, a contemporary novelist has remarked that the usual American magazine story tells of a young man who questions some established value, eventually sees the error of his ways, and is rewarded by being permitted to marry a pure American girl and reside in a cottage furnished with all the commodities advertised in the surrounding pages of the same magazine. The same reaffirmation is aided by the daily cataract of soap operas in which middle-class matrons learn that the family unit is sacrosanct and theirs to maintain, that romance can begin at thirty-five, and that while urban living is glamorous, rural residence brings peace of mind to the old. The bare and frightening bones of the formula were recently exhibited before Congressional representatives by a witness who branded a picture as un-American because it suggested that there were poor people who were unhappy.

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Lyman Bryson, replying to Mr. Young's argument in the Spring issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, is particularly emphatic in pointing out that "only something less than 15 per cent" of sold radio time is devoted to advertising, the rest being "entertainment, usually but not always supplied by the advertising agency." A similar if less wide division is evident in the press, while for films the entertainment is, to all intents and purposes, undisturbed. But it is precisely this entertainment, whether supplied by the advertising agency, the network, or the movie producer, which engages in an endless reaffirmation of the status quo of social and economic mores. Here is probably no deliberate engineering of consent; but here is a total lack of stimulus for the critical spirit, and a steady, if gentle, discouragement of any daring departures.

IV

This flow of propaganda in favor of the status quo enjoys two native advantages for which the more deliberate propagandist continually strives: monopoly position and the need of merely implementing existing needs rather than creating new ones. Mass media's happy possession of these characteristics has been abundantly explained by Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton, but the point is sufficiently important to bear a repetition of their thesis.

"Monopoly propaganda" is simply a term applied to propaganda which is for one or another reason wholly unopposed. Such propaganda has been found to be eminently successful, whereas the dissemination of directly opposing propaganda tends, other conditions being equal, to be ineffective. Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet have demonstrated, for example, that pre-election campaigns have no significant effect on the proportionate division of the total vote.

Monopoly is of course the native situation for propaganda in a totalitarian state, but it is by no means uncommon in a democracy. During the war, for example, government efforts to build war morale were unopposed and singularly successful. Kate Smith's war-bond marathon, as Dr. Merton has shown, faced no opposition and was for that reason (and others) likewise successful. And big business—in its direct appeals, but even more so in its reaffirmation of existent attitudes—is also unopposed and singularly successful. Two cigarette

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manufacturers may compete with each other, but neither will ever directly criticize the other's product, and never will either allow some other advertiser to inveigh against smoking. The advertisement of a popular cigarette is reputed to have elicited the outraged ire of candy makers when it pushed the slogan advising the overweight to reach for a cigarette instead of a sweet. Monopoly position is zealously maintained.

In their reaffirmation of the existent mores, the entertainment products of mass media function from an even more assured monopoly status. Not only do the commercial powers eschew the unaccepted view, but the very need to maintain the widest possible audience precludes the questioning of sanctioned attitudes. Successful as usual, the monopoly propaganda effects wider and more intense sanction for the already accepted views, further reduces the possibility of articulate opposition, and thus, coming fully around a vicious if not wholly pre-planned circle, reenforces its own monopoly position.

The effectiveness of mass media in its career of reaffirmation is further assured by the fact that the requisite persuasion is directed only at implementing existing motives, and not at creating new ones. Bartlett has pointed out that most people are willing and even eager to brush their teeth; mass media, in the service of the brush manufacturers, need only persuade their audience to try one brand of tool rather than another—or, better still, to try each in turn. Lazarsfeld has acutely added this is quite a different task from persuading the audience to love a specific minority group, for which no need is felt in the first place. Mass media are highly effective in pointing a route to satisfy existent drives. They have not yet proved themselves adequate for the more complex psychological task of creating new ones.

V

In this analytic light, the successes of American mass media in their engineering of consent begin to take on a distinctly homogeneous character, and the limitations of the engineering begin to come clear. Functioning in a democracy and under commercial control, the media are exquisitely fitted to turn the status quo into a social law. They have as yet revealed no power to work impressive change.

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New ideas are not likely to find a voice in the media, and such voice as they may occasionally attain is unlikely to find a large or loyal audience. Dangerous capabilities the media most certainly possess—but in America the danger is of dross rather than revolution.

To point the warning finger at dross is to admit the possibility of dross becoming institutionalized. For a democratic society, this would be death by evolution, rather than revolution. Nor is any of this to gainsay that mass media might, through their prestige effects, be used to lead a minority to violence which, once incited, might result in revolution. The mechanisms, however, would again be the same: the media would be guiding a minority to a violent implementation of their existing drives. But insofar as those drives were minority characteristics only, the full force of the media could never be brought to bear. A limited consent could be temporarily engineered; conformity could be attained only by force of superior arms.

For a revolution already accomplished, mass media can provide progressively efficient buttressing. A government which comes into sudden complete control of the nation's mass media is *ipso facto* in a monopoly position regarding *all* communication, propagandistic or otherwise. Significantly enough, however, the new power ordinarily uses the media at first to provide information calculated to consolidate its position. Press and film announce the accomplished fact and assure the population not that they must look at the world in a new way, but that their existent needs will now be the better sated. The immediate jockeying is for the old position of reaffirmation by implementation.

In America, where commercial control sanctions only the sanctioned, rebels are particularly unlikely to receive much aid from mass media. The essential danger of mass media in America lies in their ability to inflate existing consent to the point of a dull unanimity, and so to achieve social and economic stasis. Against such an attack by accretion, the only rampart is an extensive critical spirit. The rampart can be raised only if the media themselves exemplify, encourage and applaud the habit of both general and specific inquiry.

For such a social effect, the occasional highly commendable attempts by the larger media organizations are wholly inadequate. Against the total routine product of mass media, these occasional

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items are statistically non-existent, and however commendable or even daring the content, limits are indirectly imposed by big business, which supplies the necessary finances. For a rebirth of the critical spirit, a more basic change is essential.

The apparent panaceas suggested to date cannot withstand analytic light. Government ownership (as, to a lesser degree, government regulation) substitutes one monopoly for another, and is predestined to be no better than the government itself. Subsidies or tax exemptions to finance appropriate programs do not eliminate the need of the media competing for the rest of the time in a commercial arena, and hence being still loath to flirt with unpopular content, however financed.

Some few social scientists, the writer among them, look hopefully toward the field of attitude psychology, where recent findings suggest that the formation and practice of the questing spirit might be made likable in itself. If and when the cultivation of inquiry can be made attractive, the problem of mass media and their engineering of consent will be far on the way to solution. If the media are enabled to engineer inquiry, or even a variety of consents, the peril of unanimity will be obviated. The engineering of consent is a basic human activity; the nurture of active doubt and divergent goals is the essence of democratic communication.

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In Time of Doubt

Robert Brittain

Seeing the scarlet runner sagging withered and slack
around its upright pole,
and on their separate shrunken mounds the yellowing
coil of vines that had promised such fat
melons by midsummer,
and flared squash-flowers hanging limp as widow's
weeds on the stringy stems that would not
swell to fruit,
and sterile all this green endeavor sprung from the
annual seed:

I make this praise in the dry day of whatever is
obstinate, tough, mulish, stiff with
resistance, thorned,
trusting the deeper thrust of the root, the perennial
stubbornness
of all the grapplers at earth who have learned how
to wait, saying

"If not this year, then the next," saying
"A solider grip is a kind of blossoming also," and
always saying
"Fruitful or lean, summer
is a certain stretch of days
and any spring to a bee is like any other."

I speak this praise with my lips to the cracked earth
where deep-down moisture trickles and life is busy.

•Poems by ROBERT BRITTAIN, formerly assistant professor at Queens College, have appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harpers*, *Poetry*, the *Sewanee Review*, *Anthology of the Younger Poets*, and THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. His critical edition of Christopher Smart will be published soon.

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The Poetry of Dylan Thomas

W. Y. Tindall

DYLAN Thomas is little known in this country. By those who have read him, however, he is commonly regarded as the best of the younger poets. In my opinion he is not only the best of these, but the best and most magical English-speaking poet to have appeared since Yeats began to write. Thomas is surprisingly different from Yeats and the other poets of our time. In place of Yeats's grandeur, Eliot's austerity, and Auden's chumminess, Thomas offers a more than Elizabethan abundance.

One might expect a druidical and almost surrealist Welshman to be obscure. But it may seem a pity that a poet as important as Thomas is so puzzling that sometimes a second reading—or even a third—does little to help.

Since the Eliot period readers have become more or less accustomed to poetic obscurity. Some trace it to the separation of the poet from society, others to the lack of traditions. Our age, they say, provides few universally accepted ideas, myths or symbols, for the use of poets, who, like Yeats or Auden, are driven by their need of a central idea to arrange synthetic systems of their own. While Thomas may owe some of his obscurity to his separation from the reader, and to the consequent conviction that he need take no pains to communicate with him, he is free on the whole from privacy. His central ideas and symbols come from our most public stock, from Freud on the one hand and from the Bible on the other. If these familiar clues are kept in mind, Thomas becomes almost readable at fourth or fifth reading, clearer in fact to most readers of our time than Mr. Eliot, who takes what he needs from the *Upanishads* or Milton.

•WILLIAM YORK TINDALL, associate professor of English at Columbia University, is the author of *Forces in Modern British Literature, 1885-1946*. An article on T. S. Eliot by Mr. Tindall appeared in the Autumn, 1947, number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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From Freud, Thomas learned about dreams. What he learned accounts in part for the images, the syntax and the themes of his poems, and for their hallucinatory brilliance. A dream, says Freud, as if describing a poem by Thomas, is a series of images, apparently contradictory and nonsensical, but arising from hidden material that yields a clear meaning. On the manifest level of the dream occur those symbols of garden, apple or serpent, that appear so conspicuously in the myths of our ancestors. These symbols are there, says Freud (again as if describing a poem by Thomas), so that they cannot be understood. The conscious mind, beguiled by manifest wonders, is kept by them from awareness of the latent meaning, which is generally sexual. Accepting this theory as a theory of poetic composition, Thomas makes artificial dreams. The rich, attractive confusion of his surface is the manifest level which at once conceals and reveals the latent meaning. When analyzed, or rather psychoanalyzed, the surface disorder yields the hidden sense.

Every reader of Freud knows that hollow objects generally symbolize the female, while long, mobile or fierce objects generally symbolize the male. Thomas' bewildering turtles and asylums are female symbols; his blades, octopuses and thumbs are male. Sometimes by punning condensations, like those used by Lewis Carroll in "Jabberwocky" or James Joyce in *Finnegans Wake*, Thomas combines the relations of the sexes into one figure—for example, "the kissproof world." Kissproof is the name of a lipstick. Therefore this word resolves itself into lip (female), stick (male), and, by its literal sense, frustration. Around these primary meanings, in their context, cluster innumerable associations.

"A face of hands," another image, seems surrealistic. This is not surprising because the surrealists, also exploiting the unconscious, use images of madness, infancy and dream. But there is a difference between Thomas and the surrealists. While they pretend to avoid conscious interference with the unconscious, Thomas is always in apparent control of his materials. In its context, "a face of hands" refers to clocks; on another level, it acts as an image of grief. To Freud, clocks—and presumably their faces—are feminine, hands masculine. Beyond these meanings, however, is the lunatic picture of a face composed of hands.

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All these meanings are cunningly contrived, but if nothing other than rational control were operating, the image would be sterile. As it stands, the image appears to be spontaneous. For this effect there must be constant cooperation, during the writing of the poem, between the poet's conscious and unconscious minds—as, for instance, during a day dream in which the conscious employs what the unconscious suggests.

Two stanzas from the first poem of Thomas' *Selected Writings** will serve to show his images in their context and their arrangement. He is speaking of "the boys of summer in their ruin":

> These boys of light are curdlers in their folly,
> Sour the boiling honey;
> The jacks of frost they finger in the hives;
> There in the sun the frigid threads
> Of doubt and dark they feed their nerves;
> The signal moon is zero in their voids.

A few stanzas later, the boys reply:

> We are the dark deniers, let us summon
> Death from a summer woman,
> A muscling life from lovers in their cramp,
> From the fair dead who flush the sea
> The bright-eyed worm on Davy's lamp,
> And from the planted womb the man of straw.

Even if we keep Freud in mind, this is difficult. But there is a mad intensity about it that is deeply moving. It is as if, while our intellects were occupied in hunting the sense, the poet's unconscious were addressing levels within us far below the rational. After several readings, however, something comes clear. The principal theme of the poem is the life cycle from conception to maturity. The ruined boys are successively cells, embryos and adults, and their development is parallel to that of the four seasons. In the first stanza quoted above, the climate is wintry; the embryos are in their wombs, awaiting the signal of the ninth moon for birth. The honey images, undoubtedly masculine, are matched by dark feminine hives and voids.

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The violent and careful antitheses of boiling and frost, light and dark, death and life, point to Thomas' central obsession: the identity of birth, love and death; of womb and tomb. The boys of summer are ruined because conception is the beginning of death. There is a more complicated expression of the same idea in "Davy's lamp." The meaning of this apparatus is qualified by the fact that it is used in mines (an image of the grave), and by the fact that Davy Jones's locker lies under the maternal sea.

Davy's lamp seems to have little in common with the "man of straw" that follows it. Part of our trouble may come from the apparent lack of connection among the symbols. And, although the syntax of these stanzas is plain, part of our trouble with other poems may come from doubts about the function of the words, and about their relationships.

> After the funeral, mule praises, brays,
> Windshake of sailshaped ears . . .

In the first of these lines is "brays" a noun or a verb? Is "mule" a noun or an adjective? Nothing in the sentence immediately resolves this ambiguity. But Freud's theory of dreams explains both incoherence and grammatical confusion. Dreaming is an archaic process. Incapable of grammar and logic, the dream presents visual images without their connections. However annoying to logicians, such freedom has its aesthetic advantages; for syntax is limiting, and, without it, associations, like that famous horseman, can gallop off in several directions.

Yet beneath this manifest disorder, the poems of Dylan Thomas have great elegance of shape. The song of the boys of summer is tightly constructed. Lines of one stanza echo those of another; the interconnections are firm, and the quarrels among ideas and images are finally resolved. The skeleton of the poem is the latent meaning—which, like that of a dream, may be expressed in statements.

When we have arrived at the shaping statements that compose the latent level, we must not think that we have mastered the poem. The value of the poem is partly a matter of surface tensions and partly the interplay of surface and interior, of fixed meaning and endless variety. Each symbol is connected with the latent meaning,

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yet each maintains a subtler and almost ineffable relationship with its incongruous neighbors. The demands of this relationship explain why, from the variety that dreams permit, Thomas chose one symbol rather than another—why, for example, he chose a crocodile and a hearse, rather than a steam roller and a pot of pinks.

To a Freudian these pairs of symbols might be almost identical. But Thomas, being a poet, is more than a Freudian—even in his themes. Many of his poems concern poetic creation, in which he finds a parallel to conception and embryonic development. "I, in my intricate image," he says, "stride on two levels." One of these is usually sexual, the other literary. And the same symbols, by a triumph of economy, serve both the levels:

> Especially when the October wind
> (Some let me make you of autumnal spells,
> The spider-tongued, and the loud hill of Wales)
> With fist of turnips punishes the land,
> Some let me make you of the heartless words.
> The heart is drained that, spelling in the scurry
> Of chemic blood, warned of the coming fury.
> By the sea's side hear the dark-vowelled birds.

These lines reveal the poet as a druid casting spells. When the druid speaks of striding on two levels, he is understating his case. Usually he strides on three. The third of these is religious. Reared in the tradition of Welsh protestantism, Thomas is saturated with the Bible, upon which he calls for almost half his images. He is as much at home on Jacob's ladder as on Freud's sofa. If we hold with Freud and Jung that myth is dream, and if we admit the Bible to be myth, then the connection between Thomas' Freudian and Biblical images becomes plain. As his symbols "outelbow" space and time, they serve again with the same economy. "Tree," which is phallic or maternal on the Freudian level, means the cross or the tree of life on the Biblical, and on still another level it means tree.

One of the happiest examples of this double, or rather, triple talk, is the poem that begins "To-day, this insect, and the world I breathe." Cutting his symbolic insect in two, the poet makes head and tail witnesses to this "murder of Eden and green genesis."

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This story's monster has a serpent caul,
Blind in the coil scrams round the blazing outline,
Measures his own length on the garden wall
And breaks his shell in the last shocked beginning;
A crocodile before the chrysalis,
Before the fall from love the flying heartbone,
Winged like a sabbath ass this children's piece
Uncredited blows Jericho on Eden.

. . . . . .

Death: death of Hamlet and the nightmare madmen,
An air-drawn windmill on a wooden horse,
John's beast, Job's patience, and the fibs of vision,
Greek in the Irish sea the ageless voice:
"Adam I love, my madmen's love is endless,
No tell-tale lover has an end more certain,
All legends' sweethearts on a tree of stories,
My cross of tales behind the fabulous curtain."

The main themes of this poem seem to be the nature of myth, the fall and regeneration of man, and the writing of a poem. The scene in the Garden of Eden is presented in Freudian terms as conception, gestation and birth. References to Don Quixote's windmill and the wooden horse of Troy support the mythical framework. Speaking at the end, Christ or Death, made one by Thomas' passion for opposites, hangs all myths upon the central tree. Why his voice should be "Greek in the Irish sea" I do not know. But what of the insect? "The insect," says Thomas, "is the plague of fables." In at least one of his roles, this doubtful creature represents the multiplicity of fables, eventually made one upon the cross.

This poem is more or less typical of Thomas' early work. In what he published in 1934 and 1936, the climate is that of "the brawned womb's weathers"; the scenery, when not that of womb, is that of tomb or, sometimes, of the Garden. The rhythms are monotonous and hypnotic; the rhymes, though carefully arranged, are often dissonant. In *The Map of Love* (1939) the poet emerges occasionally from his obstetrical retreat into the light of common day. But even the famous elegy for Ann Jones concerns a funeral. While other poets of the thirties were trying to come to terms with society, Thomas was gloomily accepting the fundamentals. His only joy appears to have been the craftsman's joy in technical accomplishment.

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After 1939, the air raids elevated Thomas' preoccupation with what he now called "deaths and entrances" into compassion for mankind. He had been fascinated with horrors of life, but now his concern became what Baudelaire called the horror and ecstasy of life. He had traced the cycle of birth, death and birth again within a sexual-religious frame, but now his concern became the resurrection. In "Ceremony After a Fire Raid" he grieves over

> A child of a few hours
> With its kneading mouth
> Charred on the black breast of the grave
> The mother dug, and its arms full of fires.

"Grave," "dug" and "fires," as we might now expect, are ambiguous. The fires—not only those of London—are vital fires connecting the child with past and future, with Adam and Eve and the Savior. By Thomas' ritual of grief, the religion that had seemed almost ornamental is now alive, and the child, becoming everyman, repeats in his death man's fall and regeneration:

> Into the organpipes and steeples
> Of the luminous cathedrals,
> Into the weathercocks' molten mouths
> Rippling in twelve-winded circles,
> Into the dead clock burning the hour
> Over the urn of sabbaths
> Over the whirling ditch of daybreak
> Over the sun's hovel and the slum of fire
> And the golden pavements laid in requiems,
> Into the bread in a wheatfield of flames,
> Into the wine burning like brandy,
> The masses of the sea
> The masses of the sea under
> The masses of the infant-bearing sea
> Erupt, fountain, and enter to utter for ever
> Glory glory glory
> The sundering ultimate kingdom of genesis' thunder.

In these magnificent lines, the particulars of burning London are made universal by myth. Freud's imagery of sex (clocks, urns, steeples and the sea) is raised to the service of eternal life. Imagery of worship (steeples, bread, wine and masses) conspires with Freud's to summon glory.

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The postwar poems are quieter, but no less magical. Innocent of Freud and the Bible, "Fern Hill" is the recovery in all its morning freshness of the poet's youth, and, beyond this, of youth itself:

> Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs
> About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green,
> The night above the dingle starry,
> Time let me hail and climb
> Golden in the heydays of his eyes,
> And honoured among wagons I was prince of the apple towns
> And once below a time I lordly had the trees and leaves
> Trail with daisies and barley
> Down the rivers of the windfall light.

Recently Thomas has been appearing not only in the little magazines, to which his strangeness and difficulty had committed him, but also in politer magazines as well. In July, 1947, a short prose sketch appeared in *Vogue;* in December, 1947, a long poem was printed in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Can this mean that the general reader is adapting himself to Thomas, or that Thomas is adapting himself to the general reader? It is possible that Thomas' growing fame has aroused a curiosity which his growing simplicity makes it possible to gratify. It is probable that Thomas has seen the value of simplicity. The autobiographical sketch in *Vogue* might be described as commercial. "In Country Sleep," the poem in the *Atlantic*, is comparatively thin. But it makes no other concession to popular demand.

Easier than most of its predecessors and much more tender, this poem is another celebration of childhood—not his own this time, but that of Caitlin, his daughter:

> Never and never, my girl riding far and near
> In the land of the hearthstone tales, and spelled asleep,
> Fear or believe that the wolf in a sheepwhite hood
> Loping and bleating roughly and blithely shall leap,
> My dear, my dear,
> Out of a lair in the flocked leaves in the dew dipped year
> To eat your heart in the house in the rosy wood.

The images are less tightly concentrated than usual; the tensions have been relaxed. That this is fitting in a lullaby is evident; for if

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the tensions were maintained, the child would stay awake. As the poet tires his sleepy girl with fairy tales (*Little Red Riding Hood* among them), he calms her consequent fear of wolves by the assurance that nature is holy. This conviction is made richly sensuous by reminiscences of Gerard Manley Hopkins:

> Through haygold stalls, as the dew falls on the wind-
> Milled dust of the apple tree . . .

The rhythm too is that of Hopkins, who, along with Donne and Herbert, presides over these later poems. As one might suppose, the machinery of worship is Catholic now, or Anglo-Catholic, and although in the wound and apples some Freudian relics remain, they are sublimated by reverence. The effect of this poem, as of all his later poems, is a tranquillity uncommon in our time.

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Coal Strike Ends As of 5:00 A.M.

Ralph L. Kinsey

The pit-mouth lies deserted, and the cars,
More silent than their masters, through the night
Turn sullen, empty faces to the stars;
And hard, pale men, with animal delight,
Glance eastward toward the unaccustomed dawn.
Beneath them, deep within the purpled earth,
Wind catacombs where other men have gone
Their slanted way to slow, unwanted death.
The moon is fading, now, and soon the sun,
With golden-handed power, obliterates
The darkness and the damp, while one by one,
Now here, now there, a figure separates
And goes below. The pit-mouth, with an eye
Cyclopeanly evil, cons the sky.

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Intervention and Revolution: 1918 and 1948

Meribeth E. Cameron

AS THE United States faces the problems of world recovery, the issue of "aid to China" is constantly raised as an element in our policy of supporting non-Communist régimes and "containing" the U.S.S.R. "Aid to China" is not the most illuminating phrase for the action of our government. The Chinese people are in the midst of one of the greatest of all revolutions. The current phase of that revolution is a civil war between the Chinese Nationalist government and the Chinese Communists—which naturally appears to many Americans as simply another manifestation of the world struggle between capitalism and communism, and even as another projection of the contest between the United States and the U.S.S.R. The real issue for us in the Far East is not "aid to China": it is whether and to what extent the United States shall intervene in the Chinese revolution in the effort to deflect its force into channels acceptable to us. All through 1947 the American government hesitated on the brink of forward action in China. Today, in 1948, it is granting further assistance in goods and advice to the Nationalist government. The whole question of Chinese "aid"—to whom, how much, and with what probable results—deserves intensive study, not only in terms of our fairly immediate relations with the U.S.S.R., but even more in terms of our long-range relations with the Chinese people.

Thirty years ago, the victorious Allies faced a similar problem, as World War I came to an end, but the Russian revolution continued. Historical parallels admittedly have their dangers, but it is tempting

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and enlightening to assess the results of foreign intervention in Russia in 1918 to 1920, as a possible basis for prediction of what may come of intervention in the Chinese revolution today.

In Russia thirty years ago, participation in world war had brought the collapse of the Tsarist regime and, after a few months, the emergence of a government controlled by the most extreme of all Russian revolutionary groups—the Bolsheviks or Communists. They soon got "peace at the front" by the treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, but they faced "war at the rear," with various types of "whites" and "pinks" opposing them. In all of this, Great Britain and France were keenly interested. When Russia weakened as a fighting partner, they proposed to intervene to reconstitute an eastern front against Germany, somewhat as the United States flew in war materials to bolster up China's flagging war effort in the later stages of World War II. When the Bolsheviks made peace with Germany, repudiated Tsarist debts, and displayed a very Marxist urge for world revolution, the character of Anglo-French intervention changed. British and French soldiers, advisers, supplies and money went to support various anti-Bolshevik groups.

The United States also took part in this intervention. It sent troops to Siberia, but not so much to determine the course of Russian politics as to checkmate imperialist Japan. To the annoyance of our allies, General Graves, the commander of American forces in Siberia, pursued a neutral course, while the British and Japanese supported notorious reactionaries. The United States brought its troops home from Siberia in 1920, but the Japanese did not win the game. Lack of support at home in Japan, the expense of the venture, the consolidation of Russian opposition, and the hostility of the other great powers, brought about Japan's withdrawal, and eventually eastern Siberia became a part of the Soviet system.

Viewed in the large, Allied intervention in the Russian revolution was a failure. War weariness in the victorious countries, plus sympathy in some quarters for communism as a working-class movement, meant that intervention was on a comparatively small scale. Dissensions among the Whites gave the Bolsheviks a chance to tick off their opponents one by one. And meanwhile, the Russian people, faced with the hard choice between Whites and Reds, had to decide

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which was preferable—the restoration of an unloved *status quo ante*, or the creation of a very strange and strenuous sounding utopia. In this dilemma, foreign intervention actually contributed to the triumph of the Bolsheviks, by enabling the Communists to appear before the Russian people as the leaders of Russian patriotism, the defenders of Russian soil against the foreign invaders and their puppets, the Whites. In time the French and British retired from the field discomfited, and the French in particular had ample opportunity to remember how foreign military intervention in 1792 had invoked the *levée en masse* and rallied Frenchmen of many kinds to the defense of the French revolution and of French soil. Foreign intervention in Russia had made a group of internationalist Marxists the symbols of a nationalism as fervent as that of 1792 and 1793.

Whether the failure of western policy toward Russia just after World War I was one not of kind but of amount was subject for argument. Would a bigger and better intervention have succeeded? The debate was an academic one: no full-scale foreign invasion of Russia was possible in 1919. Moreover, one may fairly question whether such a procedure would have been any more effective in establishing an enduring conservative régime. It could not have sat on bayonets, and foreign bayonets at that, indefinitely.

In many ways the present situation in China resembles that in Russia a generation ago. In both cases there is the essential fact of a great revolution, continuing after the world war with which it was enmeshed has ended. In both cases, interventionists have first intervened to help the country in revolution win the war. Later, they have come to see in the conflicting revolutionary groups one agreeable to them in ideology, another disagreeable and even dangerous, and have inclined to the support of one group against the other in an attempt to control the course of the revolution. In the Russian case, where the drama has been played out, intervention backfired painfully, helping to insure the persistence of the Communists and to establish their chronic bitterness toward, and suspicion of, the West. In the Chinese case, the play is still going on, and the chief interested foreign power is still free to determine whether it can successfully play *deus ex machina.*

The drama in China today is of course not a repetition of that

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in Russia thirty years ago. Some of the same actors take part in both dramas, but not in the same roles. The United States today is *the* world power, with a sense of might and mission which it did not have in 1918. Today it is not Britain or France or, most certainly, Japan, which is disposed to throw its weight into the Chinese revolutionary scales—it is America. And the enemy which the United States would attempt to block by this action is not the Chinese Communist party: it is the U.S.S.R., of which Americans tend to regard the Chinese Communists as a sort of Far Eastern fifth column. Ironically enough, it is the survival and growth of that same bolshevist régime which thirty years ago provided the occasion for intervention in the Russian revolution that now seems to many Americans to call for American intervention in the Chinese revolution. There is an energetic group in this country urging intervention to "save China from communism." Recollection of the ill-starred effort to "save Russia from bolshevism" thirty years ago should give us pause. Intervention in full-scale revolution is a tricky business, with consequences hard to calculate. What may be the results of American aid to the Chinese equivalents of the Russian Whites? Today in the Far East, as in Europe, we must analyze the situation realistically, and reckon our risks with care.

Perhaps the greatest historical phenomenon of our time is the Chinese revolution, which has been going on for decades and may continue for decades more. The Chinese people, about one-fourth of the human race, are groping toward a prosperous and independent existence in the modern world. Shoddy pseudo-republicanism, warlordism, Sun Yat-senism, communism and western-style liberalism have all had their turn on the stage in China in the twentieth century. But the Chinese people, unlike the Russians, have not yet found their new pattern—or strait jacket. The current struggle between Chinese Nationalists and Chinese Communists is by no means a mere product of postwar confusion in China: it has been one of the themes of the Chinese revolution for over twenty years. The threat of Japanese invasion brought the Communists and the Kuomintang together in 1937; but long before Japan's defeat, the united front was cracking. August, 1945, marked the end of international war in China and the resumption of civil strife. In 1946, efforts at com-

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promise under the aegis of the United States failed, and today the civil war is proceeding with unprecedented bitterness.

How do the two Chinese parties compare in program, personnel, achievements and popular appeal? American action in China should be based on a considered answer to this question (not on an almost automatic reaction against anything called "Communist") if our intervention is not to result as did that of the Allies in Russia. The Nationalist party has been the government of China for twenty years. In the late 1920's it swept into power in the name of Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary slogans of Nationalism, Democracy and People's Livelihood. Today it shows many signs of ossification. Its leaders, the bright young men of the twenties, are now loath to surrender power, fearful of social change, and engaged in the Canute-like task of trying to arrest a revolution which is still in full tide.

Of Sun's principles, only one, *Nationalism*, has received substantial testimonial from Chiang Kai-shek and his associates: the Kuomintang appealed to Chinese anti-foreign sentiment in its rise to power, and continued to be the symbol of Chinese patriotic spirit in the struggle with Japan. Sun's second principle, *Democracy*, is supposed to be achieved in 1948, but the shiny new constitution may well turn out to be window dressing, behind which the Nationalist party will continue to do business at the old stand in the old way.

People's Livelihood has fared no better than democracy. The Nanking government has not answered the problems of the Chinese peasant; modern industry has not revived since the war, and an inflationary spiral wheels its way upward, fed by the printing of money to finance civil war, and the obvious decline of popular support for the Nationalist régime. It would be naïve and unfair to lay all of China's multitudinous economic and social difficulties at the door of the Chinese government. Both revolution and war have ravaged China. Yet a courageous government could make headway toward Chinese social and economic well-being. The Nanking government has been notable neither for reforming zeal nor for economic stabilization, and the extent to which it commands the loyalty and confidence of the Chinese people today is highly questionable.

Moreover, the Nationalists are now faced with an extremely formidable opposition movement, the Chinese Communist party, which

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year by year has grown in strength and appeal and which has been gaining on the Nationalists by leaps and bounds during the past two years. The chiefs of the Chinese Communist party are Marxists, but they are also men of flexible and practical mind. As leaders of a minority party which has had to win popular backing to survive, they have followed a grass roots policy designed to appeal to the Chinese peasants. Like the Russian Communists of a generation ago, they have been promoting the class war in the villages. Confiscation and redistribution of land, and shift of political power in the villages, are naturally unpopular with the more prosperous Chinese landholders, but there have been many more poor than rich in the Chinese countryside.

In China today, as in Russia after the First World War, mass sentiment will swing to whichever side seems to represent the accomplishment of substantial social and economic changes. The Communists have snatched leadership in reform from the Nationalists, who no longer seem to be capable of fighting the fire of communism with a counterfire of Sun Yat-senist democracy and livelihood. Against the Nationalists, the Chinese Communists can summon up the same widespread guerrilla activity which they were able to invoke against the Japanese. In addition, they now have in the field well-organized and well-trained armies, equipped with weapons seized from the Japanese and from the Nationalists. Nanking is doing poorly in the civil war. The Communists are winning control of Manchuria, are very active in North China, and have launched their armies and propaganda centers into central and south China.

The existence of this intense civil war in China, with one of the participants a Communist party, of course raises serious problems for American policy. Discussion of what we should do about China has been repeatedly interjected into the consideration of our European aid program. From 1945 to 1947, our Chinese policy was a fairly clear one, although our efforts to implement it were conspicuously unsuccessful. In December, 1945, President Truman expressed our desire to assist in the emergence of a strong, united democratic China. Throughout 1946, General Marshall worked as mediator to bring together in a coalition government Nationalists, Communists, the small middle-of-the-road parties of the Democratic League, and non-

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party Chinese. By January, 1947, this effort at mediation had failed completely. Failure was not too surprising, for the mutual hatred of Nationalists and Communists had not been overcome. But failure was in part due to the unhappy contradictions of American action in China. The American government simultaneously treated the Nationalist party as one of several political groups which must compromise with one another to achieve a real government, and as the government of China, entitled to American lend-lease, advisers and troop transport. What should one say about an umpire who gives one of the fighters brass knuckles?

After the dismal collapse of negotiations in China, American policy marked time throughout most of 1947. What now? Are we still intent on the realization of a strong, united democratic China? Or have we ceased to have a Chinese policy in the proper sense of the term? Many American leaders show a marked tendency to subordinate our Chinese policy to our Russian policy, and to treat China as merely another maneuvering ground on which the United States opposes the U.S.S.R.—in this case indirectly, through support of the Nanking régime against the Chinese Communists. This line of policy calls for the most careful and realistic scrutiny. Is China, through the activity of the Communist party there, in danger of being drawn behind the "iron curtain" as Eastern European states have been? There is no convincing evidence that as yet the U.S.S.R. has given substantial material aid to the Chinese Communists; in fact, it has maintained correct diplomatic relations with Nanking under the treaty of 1945. Nevertheless the advocates of aid to Nanking argue that Chinese communism, though it wears native dress, is Soviet within, and that it would be better to oppose it vigorously now than to wait until it grows stronger and more closely aligned with Russian communism.

Should we therefore forthwith give aid to some group in China which will block communism? If so, what group? At the time of his departure from China, in January, 1947, General Marshall praised the Chinese liberals as that element in China best suited to provide a progressive régime. Where are these Chinese liberals? The Democratic League, which included many of them, has been suppressed by the Kuomintang. At the meetings of the new National Assembly

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and the new Legislature in the spring of 1948, there were signs of restlessness within Nationalist ranks. General Li Tsung-jen, running on a reform platform, was elected vice-president, despite the opposition of the Kuomintang old guard. The surest barometer of popular confidence in the Nationalist régime, the black market exchange rate, has continued to fall. By June it was about $1,500,000 Chinese for one dollar United States. Chinese politics are polarized and the choice seems to be between the Communists, who are drawing closer to Moscow, the Nationalists, who are still dominated by reactionaries, or nothing.

Under these circumstances, should we support Nanking? The State Department, after conspicuous hesitation and under political pressure, finally produced a very modest proposal for assistance to the Nationalist government. The foreign aid law contains a sum of $463,000,000 for China—$125,000,000 of which may be used for military supplies. The Nanking régime is obviously very sick indeed, with an ailment which a few hundred millions of American aid is not likely to cure. If our purpose in China is the positive one of encouraging decent democratic government, the Nationalist government is not, on its past record, a promising agent for such a purpose. If our policy is the negative one of opposing communism, the Nationalist government is a very shaky bulwark. Since the end of hostilities in 1945, the United States has supplied over $2,000,000,000 of aid to the Chinese government in a vain effort to check its deterioration. Will another sum in nine figures turn the trick, or is it a mere delaying device, postponing but not likely to prevent final collapse? The British and French, by aid to the Russian Whites after World War I, made the Bolsheviks great embodiments of Russian patriotism. Today the Chinese Communists are wrapping themselves in the mantle of nationalism and inveighing against the wickedness of American "imperialism" in China and the craven anti-nationalism of the Nationalist régime. It will not be hard to make the Chinese people think of the United States as the perpetuator of civil war in China, and of the Kuomintang as the betrayer of that same vigorous anti-foreign nationalism which was its chief appeal in the past.

The only sort of American intervention that might be decisive rather than provocative would have to be on an unthinkable scale,

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involving extensive American control of the Chinese government and employment of American military forces. Such action would probably mean Soviet intervention in the Chinese struggle. Even domination of the Chinese scene by American military and economic power, if it were conceivable, would not be guaranteed to "settle" the Chinese issue to our taste. The revolutionary movement of the Chinese people is one of the great cultural transformations of history. It dwarfs even the Russian revolution. To try to bend this tremendous phenomenon to the shape of our present foreign policy is unwise and unrealistic. Should we intervene to direct China's political and economic development in terms of our current interests in our power struggle with Russia, rather than in terms of the long-range needs and desires of the 481,000,000 Chinese? If we attempt to use the Chinese as pawns in our game, we may, like the British and French in Russia a generation ago, be clothing our nightmares in flesh and blood. We may be playing into the hands of the group in China which is distasteful to us, winning the hostility of the mass of the Chinese people, and bringing the United States into direct conflict with the U.S.S.R. The immediate prospect seems to be that of a weak, divided, undemocratic China, but foreign interference is not necessarily the device which will insure Chinese union, strength and democracy. Our Chinese policy must be based primarily on a sympathetic knowledge of the vast changes going on in China, rather than on doctrinaire ideas of how to oppose Russia. Forbearance and restraint may serve us better in China today than intervention and military aid.

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Dickens and the Bluenose Legislator

Edgar Johnson

ON THE afternoon of April 21, 1836, in the House of Commons, a young reporter listened with angry indignation to a Member who had just risen to introduce a bill. Peering down from the Reporters' Gallery through the haze and the glare of the chandeliers, he could see the other Members sprawled about and hear the speaker's voice through a confused noise of talking, laughing, coughing, oh-ing and groaning. The measure being introduced was "a Bill to extend to all his Majesty's subjects the privilege of protection in the due observance of the Lord's Day." Every year since 1833, the House had been voting down proposals of this kind, and every year their supporters had more persistently returned to the attack.

The proponent of the present measure was Sir Andrew Agnew, a Member of Parliament for the Scottish county of Wigtonshire. The youthful reporter was Charles Dickens. Sir Andrew, the seventh baronet of Lochnaw, a man of deeply pious feelings, had been in Parliament since 1830, and had devoted most of his time to working for Sabbath legislation. Dickens, now only a few months over twenty-four, was beginning to enjoy a mild celebrity under the name of "Boz." But for the last five years he had been the best reporter in the Gallery. And during that time he had become bitterly impatient with Parliament.

The House that had been brought in by the Reform Bill of 1832 was in fact far superior in talent and achievement to the usual legislative mediocrities. To Dickens, however, it was a crew of corrupt place-warmers and wordy windbags. Their endless, empty verbosity, and the contrast between lofty professions on the floor and jobbery

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behind closed doors, filled him with disgust. Reform had left Parliament hardly less the defender of privilege than before. Even among the Whigs, who now outnumbered the Tories three to one, there was a determined endeavor to wreck every measure that would help the poor. The defeat of Sadler's Ten Hours Bill, the rejection of Lord Ashley's Bill to limit working hours, the brutality of the new Poor Law—all proved to Dickens that the profits of landowners and industrialists still took precedence over the country's welfare.

This Sabbath Observances Bill especially infuriated him as a vicious piece of class legislation. Pretending to protect people from enforced Sunday labor, it really prohibited all those recreations that were available to the poor on Sunday—and left the well-off complacently untouched. For such a puritanical law to weigh with equal heaviness on everyone would be evil enough in spreading a blight of Sunday gloom. But how much worse was a discriminatory bill that bore down on the poor and forbade them the few poor harmless enjoyments they had! It was only another revelation of the harsh tendency to consider working people mere beasts of burden, with no right to any indulgence save the briefest surcease from toil.

Dickens' fury did not cool when he made his way through the narrow wicket at the rear of the Reporters' Gallery, down the treacherous stairs, and across to the little tavern in the Palace Yard where there was an upstairs room kept sacred to reporters. He knew that the Lord's Day Society, which was supporting Sir Andrew, kept Parliament bombarded with hundreds of petitions, signed by thousands of names. In 1834 Agnew had been pelted by lampoons and caricatures; even now almost all the London newspapers were against him; yet with this storm of petitions, he had just won a vote of 200-82 for the first reading of his bill. Dickens could not contain himself. Seething at the persistence of these dour fanatics, he set himself to compose a molten political pamphlet.

He had never tackled such a task before. At the moment, too, he was struggling through a fantastic amount of work. His first published collection of writings, *Sketches by Boz*, had done so well that he had agreed to produce a second series. By summer he must finish revising an operetta, *The Village Coquettes*, which was to open at the St. James's Theatre that fall. He had a farce under way for the

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comic actor John Pritt Harley. The successive numbers of *Pickwick Papers*, now just beginning to appear, represented another 12,000 words a month. All this was piled on top of unremitting newspaper duties. Nevertheless—and it shows the intensity of Dickens' feelings—he found the time to pour out an 11,000 word pamphlet called *Sunday Under Three Heads: As it is; As Sabbath Bills would make it; As it might be made*. Working at top speed, he got it in print by June, signed with the pseudonym "Timothy Sparks."

II

Sir Andrew Agnew's connection with the Sabbath agitation had first come about in June, 1832, when the newly formed Society for Promoting Due Observance of the Lord's Day had asked him to further its aims in Parliament. Agnew sympathized, but hesitated—might it not be poor tactics to have a Scottish rather than an English representative? On reflection, though, he felt his duty clear; and on July 3 he moved a "select committee to enquire into the laws and practices relating to the observance of the Lord's Day."

The House of Commons felt dubious from the beginning. Lord Althorp thought the subject difficult to deal with; Mr. Lamb begged that they should not destroy the cheerfulness of the English Sabbath; Mr. Hume said that if the poor were to have restrictions on their liberties, the rich should too. The committee was granted, however, and in August it made a 306 page report. It was shocked by Saturday night "pay-tables" set up in public houses where people were tempted to spend their wages on drink; by gin shops open all night and pouring out drunken men and women on Sunday morning; and by shops and markets more noisily thronged even than on weekdays. The committee pointed out that hundreds of people were by these causes forced to labor throughout the entire week without any day of rest. These all seemed genuine abuses, though a suspicious eye might have noted that the report found Sunday steamboat excursions, drives in the parks, newspapers, and tea gardens "not less productive of evil" on Sunday than trading and drink.

But at first the report had a favorable reception. "The working classes ought to have the Sabbath rest," said the *Times;* it was argued that laboring men needed protection from greedy employers; many

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petitions pleaded that the laws against Sabbath-breaking be strengthened. But when, on March 20, 1833, after a long and weary session on Ireland, Agnew submitted his bill at two in the morning, the storm broke. The bill forced a realization of how many vexatious restrictions there would be on everyone if no one was to work on Sunday. In debate two days later, Cobbett charged that the whole agitation was a put-up job by prosperous traders who disliked losing business to Sunday competitors, and who were abetted by a London society flooding the country with petitions that everybody was importuned to sign. Mr. Beaumont, the Member for Manchester, said the petitioners were moved "by cant, by humbug, and by hypocrisy." Another Member said that under pretense of preventing Sunday trading, Agnew had brought in a bill that would disrupt the whole social system.

Opposition gathered force between the first and second readings. The *Times* now called Agnew a "Scotch fanatic" and a "sour covenanter"—he was in fact Church of England—and referred to his bill as "that monstrous piece of absurdity." Members of Parliament hurled every sort of accusation against it, from pointing out the inconsistencies of its provisions to vilifying its frigid and formalistic conception of righteousness. Finally the bill was thrown out, but by the narrow margin of 79-73.

Undaunted, in the following March Agnew brought in a second bill almost identical with his first. The most striking feature of the debate that raged around it was a stinging ironical speech by Edward Lytton Bulwer, later a close associate of Dickens. Bulwer feared that the Hon. Baronet was a philosopher in disguise, "who aimed at endangering religion itself by showing to what gloomy and tyrannical purposes the name of religion might be applied." He noted that "no part of the gloomy blessings of his Bill extended to menial servants," evidently "an exclusive class especially marked out for perdition" as a sacrifice to the comfort of their masters. "Again, who were to apprehend the naughty persons attending news-rooms, or sauntering into a tea-garden? The policeman, I suppose. What! Here was another class marked out for perdition. Why were the comforts, the conscientious scruples of the policemen to be sacrified to . . . these zealous and sanctified persons . . . who

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Compound for sins they are inclined to
By damning those they have no mind to?

Unhappy servants! Unfortunate policemen! Why were their souls less dear to the Hon. Baronet than the souls of journeymen bakers and journeymen fishmongers?"

After pointing out the difficulties and dangers of forbidding the movement of all public conveyances on Sunday, Bulwer went on to argue that there was no authority for these rigors in either the Scriptures or the Church Fathers. St. Paul had said, "Let no man judge you in meat, or drink, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days." Tertullian declared it unlawful to fast on Sunday, and described the mirth and festivity with which that day was celebrated in his own time. Bulwer concluded by asking the House not to legislate in the spirit of "the Faint-Nots and the Spare-Nots—from whose rational and sober fountains of faith the Hon. Baronet drew" his inspiration.

During the two years following the defeat of this bill, the Members for Preston and Shaftesbury brought in others directed to the same objects. These Agnew supported, although he did not feel that they were strong enough. But on the floor of the House they were subjected to every kind of sabotage, destructive amendment, and delay. The very ameliorations in severity by which they sought to melt opposition evoked jeers at their inconsistency. On the other hand, clauses designed to prove that the rich were not to be favored at the expense of the poor aroused no less violent objection. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the House did not want to pass *any* bill on the subject, but hesitated to defy pious opinion by refusing outright. Its behavior, consequently, no matter where one's sympathies lie, presents an extravagant picture of evasive chicanery.

Such was the situation when Sir Andrew rose for the third time in 1836 to present a still stronger version of his old measure. A man painfully conscientious, he had been so troubled by the attacks rained down upon his sincerity that he now ate cold meals on Sunday, so that his servants should not be obliged to prepare food on that day. But he was not quite devoid of humor; he laughed at a print showing him morosely prying into a brewer's vat, and saying, "I do believe this beer is *working* on Sunday!" Deeply convinced of the rightness

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of his principles, however, he was determined not to be shouted down.

III

It was at this stage that Dickens entered the lists. He dedicated his pamphlet caustically to Dr. Blomfield, the Bishop of London, who had raised pious hands of horror over the viciousness of Sunday excursions among the lower classes. Such attitudes, Dickens said, merely reflected the upper-class cant about the poor not knowing their stations in life because the workman bought his wife a ribbon for her dress and his child a feather for her bonnet, and the entire family sauntered forth for one day's outing after six devoted to work. What was so criminal about these good-humored crowds with their picnic baskets and bulging bundles of apples on the decks of river-steamers? What was the enormity of climbing Windmill Hill, strolling among the trees of Greenwich Park, gliding past Twickenham, or glimpsing the cornfields and orchards of Kent? Only a gloomy enthusiast would insist on closing the shops for people who work so late that they have no other time to buy their Sunday's supplies with their Saturday night's wage. Only an intolerant zealot would demand that coffee-stalls be barred on Sunday mornings to dwellers in single rooms who had nowhere else to obtain their breakfasts.

The fanatics for whom Sir Andrew spoke, horrified about desecrating the Sabbath, wanted to shut the bake-shops and deprive poor people of their one weekly hot dinner of mutton and browned potatoes. Look at it being borne home, Dickens bids us, "amidst a shouting of small voices, and jumping of fat legs," while the baby in his mother's arms on the doorstep, "not precisely understanding the importance of the business in hand, but clearly perceiving that it is something unusually lively, kicks and crows most lustily." Such a scene of innocent delight "would fill Sir Andrew Agnew with astonishment; as well it might, seeing that Baronets, generally speaking, eat pretty comfortable dinners all the week through, and cannot be expected to understand what people feel, who only have a meat dinner on one day out of every seven."

The iron-hearted man who would take from such people their only pleasures, Dickens points out, would be doing his best to drive the respectable poor into the filth, disease and drunken squalor that

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characterized the wretched slum-dwellers of St. Giles and Drury Lane. Dire poverty deprived these latter of even the humble relaxations—the breath of country air, the game of cricket—available to the more fortunate. They had no amusement for the mind, no means of exercising the body. Consequently they flew to the gin-shop, and then, when they lay wallowing in the gutter, "your saintly law-givers lift up their hands to heaven, and exclaim for a law which shall convert the day intended for rest and cheerfulness, into one of universal gloom, bigotry and persecution."

But hardly less objectionable than its oppressiveness to the poor was the "deliberate cruelty and crafty injustice" with which Sir Andrew's bill exempted the rich from its provisions. They might have their servants cook their Sunday dinners and travel in their escutcheoned carriages; "the whole of saintly venom" was directed against the licensed victualler and the rumbling hackney coach that served the artisan's family. Nothing forbade the fashionable promenade, the Sunday feast, the private oratorio; it was only the newsroom and the public debate which might enlighten the people that must be guarded against. All his usual indulgences were preserved to the man of wealth; he never lacked them, and therefore they were "necessary" to him. But the poor man who saved his money to enjoy some little luxury on a Sunday must not have it; usually he did not, and therefore it was *not* necessary to *him.*

"It is customary," Dickens wrote, "to affect a deference for the motives of those who advocate these measures, and a respect for the feelings by which they are actuated. They do not deserve it. If they legislate in ignorance, they are criminal and dishonest; if they do so with their eyes open, they commit willful injustice; in either case, they bring religion into contempt. But they do NOT legislate in ignorance. Public prints, and public men, have pointed out to them again and again, the results of their proceedings." Neither genuine piety nor honest ignorance, Dickens insists, explains this bill having been repeatedly brought forward, but "an envious, heartless, ill-conditioned dislike" of seeing humble folk happy, and an un-Christian pride convinced of its "own high worthiness" and "of the demerits of others."

How ludicrous of these holy hypocrites to quote criminals who,

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on the gallows, blamed their fate on falling into dissipated ways on the Sabbath! The same argument would abolish all holidays whatever, and frown on teaching people to write because some fell into forgery. Instead of making Sunday a day of lassitude and dejection, it should be made one of rational enjoyment. Let people play outdoor games, go on walks, take excursions by boat or coach. Let the British Museum, the National Gallery, and the Gallery of Practical Science be open to working men on the one day they could go to these places, not closed at that very time. Let fields resound to the stroke of the bat, the ring of the quoit, and the sound of laughing voices. Thereby vice would only be weakened, true religion strengthened. Surely God can never intend, Dickens concludes, "that the more a man strives to discharge [his] duties, the more he shall be debarred from happiness and enjoyment." Sunday legislators should remember the words of the Master "whose precepts they misconstrue, and whose lessons they pervert—'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man to serve the Sabbath.' "

IV

There is a certain amount of angry distortion in Dickens's pamphlet, and places where it is personally unfair to Sir Andrew Agnew. Dickens ignored the countless petitions from workmen forced to labor on Sunday, as well as every other day, at tasks in no way serving the Sunday recreations of the poor. But he did not misrepresent the intolerance of a sabbatarianism bent on suppressing all sports and even cultural activities, and extending its prohibitions into almost every realm of rational enjoyment. Many of his arguments are plainly derived from the Parliamentary debates of the preceding four years. But the constant appeal to people's actual lives, and the swift, high-spirited, and fiery eloquence, are all his own, as is the warm sympathy for those in humble walks of life. The general sentiments only suggested in *Sketches by Boz* are concentrated by *Sunday Under Three Heads* into focal clarity. It establishes the position Dickens had been developing from the time he was a child-drudge in a blacking warehouse through his hard struggle upward to journalism and authorship.

While the pamphlet was still in press, Sir Andrew's bill was thrown

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out again, on May 18, by a majority of thirty-two. Dickens's blistering comment consequently had nothing to do with its defeat. When the bill was reintroduced yet once more in 1837, in fact, it was approved by the House of Commons, but lingered in committee until Parliament was dissolved by the death of William IV. Sir Andrew was not elected to the new Parliament, and no other legislator took any step to push his bill again. Possibly Dickens' pamphlet had by then added some mite of weight to a shift in public sentiment that discouraged any further attempts to force the measure.

The greatest significance, however, of *Sunday Under Three Heads* lies in its revelation that Dickens had already attained a defined social attitude. It clearly declares the stand he was now taking toward rich and poor, and displays the broad sympathy with which he surveys the duties and enjoyments of existence. It blasts the intolerance and narrowness of the dissenting clergy, too, in a way that was to prove prophetic. The nonconformist preacher of the pamphlet, with his intemperate denunciations and frantic pulpit-thumping, and the groaning enthusiasm of his congregation, did not precede by many months the red-nosed and hypocritical Stiggins in *Pickwick*, who is followed by the drunken Melchisedech Howler of *Dombey and Son* and the oily Chadband of *Bleak House*. Flagrant rectitude was always to make Dickens see red. But above all, *Sunday Under Three Heads* glows with that light of warmhearted humanism and humanitarianism that were to animate his entire life's work.

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Afternoon in Brittany

Elizabeth Stanton Hardy

Near that medallioned shrine
Sun slants through lindens.
Under the spinning leaf
The women sit with folded hands—
The slack
Gesture of immemorial grief,
Hunger and lack.
Coldness of clay is in their flesh;
With rheumy eyes
They look forever back
At what is timeless,
At what never dies.

They sit alone,
A broken sun-dial leers;
From a cracked cornice, green with moss and years,
A gargoyle peers.
Christ on a wooden Cross repeats their own
Sorrow, unspoken,
Without end, without beginning,
Under the silvery leaves of the linden,
Spinning, spinning.

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Fog

Elizabeth Stanton Hardy

Fog-banks over the marshes
Where the salt estuaries run;
Mist through dark spruces trailing
Blots out the sun.

A curious inconsequence has made
The moor anonymous;
Houses, into the soft smother
Of this dusk, are folded,
Fade.

Yet somewhere, under all,
At the far edges
Of uncertainty, the surf is feather-white
On granite ledges.

Held in this gray suspension
Between two worlds,
In darkness come too soon,
Fog draws a shade of apprehension
Across the afternoon.

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Truth and Consequences: Kinsey's Version

Robert Latou Dickinson

IF THE two most intense satisfactions in life are congenial work and successful marriage, then life's two major dissatisfactions may well be an ill-chosen vocation and an unhappy mating. One of Nature's biggest biological blunders is a decisive factor in the latter case. Of old, to people a planet she needed all impulses toward maximum fertility. Now we suffer from the hangover. An excessive, imperative function operates incessantly years before it has social sanction, and varied expressions thereof have the legal status of "crimes against nature" which entitle nine-tenths of us adults and adolescents to terms in prison or reformatory.

So it is small wonder that about the problem of sex there circle fear and denial and concealment. Therefore, it might have been predicted that a ringing summons to end the era of hush-and-pretend would stir minor whirlwinds of reaction—amusing when emotion shows through sections of science: psychiatric, statistical, anthropological. This challenge of the Kinsey Report has been overwhelming because no specific and fearless statement of this coverage had ever before been undertaken. The crux of the issue lies in check on actuality. The Report looks toward a far-reaching betterment of attitudes all the way from early infancy to old age. The frames of the issue are the three very modern conditionings of all sex activity. These war-

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Dr. Dickinson was invited to write this article as a reply to Geoffrey Gorer's "Justification by Numbers," which appeared in the Summer number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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rant even such tall words as unprecedented, inescapable and ultimately universal, as we shall note later.

To give birth to an epoch-making contribution in any field calls for an outstanding equipment of initiative, industry and integrity. To win an instant confidence from people of whom you ask intimate questions calls for the most sympathetic type of confessor—be it parent, priest, physician, psychologist or psychiatrist. To enlist as active counsellors over thirty authorities in areas in which the study trespasses, is to make for high validity. To set off a chain of popular books within five months through printing a progress report is at least arresting when that volume is science-packed with statistics.

The blunder made by our physiology in its weird provision of "surplus sex" has little to do with the present requirement for perpetuation of the family or the race. If we allow ourselves easy round numbers, we could place the age for wedding our males near twenty-five. With twenty-five as the average years of duration of marriage (as it used to be), for producing four children, twenty-five occasions of sexual intercourse would suffice, placed during ovulation time midway between menstrual periods. Actual excess sex is thus seen in a husband's urgency and capacity, averaging three outlets a week, since, in twenty-five wedlocked years this loving might foot up to twenty-five hundred repeats of intercourse, even allowing for the restriction during menses and pregnancies, now discarded, and for waning energy with advancing age.

The real biological-theological clash about the overplus of endowment and activity is concerned with the most striking of the Kinsey findings. This is the arrival of the peak of frequency of orgasm in the males of his collection at age sixteen, with a plateau that runs along to twenty and then declines in a straight line to age sixty. At one end of the scale more than once a day is possible, while at the other once a week is practiced. Kinsey states that "indeed, it is safe to say that daily orgasm would be within the capacity of the average male." Thus, for a short decade before sex activity is permitted by our mores, we are forced to consider which of the six sex outlets should be endorsed or tolerated or least condemned, in order to take on the physical function of detumescence—that is, the release of the testicular factory product which is steadily manufactured.

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Shall it be by increase of the present 10 per cent of overflow through nocturnal emissions shown as part of the total outlet? Shall it be through sanction of self-relief by masturbation? Shall such relief be associated with shame and haste calculated to condition for the defeat of technical skill in future marital intercourse? Shall this renewed account of the extent of homosexual play—say 6 per cent of total outlet—be classed as temporary deprivation or as perversion? Shall petting under any circumstances—more than half of the time carried to climax—be an accredited means to safeguard anatomical virginity? In other words, what tolerances or changes in attitudes and teaching looking toward better physical adjustment after marriage and less provocation toward divorce are we forced frankly to discuss and temperately to consider?

With a bearing directly affecting these questions, we must examine new conditioning emphasizing the timeliness of overhauling sex education. This has to do with the three elements of mounting immunity already mentioned. These are the mitigation or removal of the triple penalty on sex play or sex freedom—namely, conception, infection, detection.

There is no possibility of the arrest in the spread of knowledge of birth-control methods or of access to devices or remedies. Research is bound to bring about an increase in acceptability. It looks to the provision of simple self-diagnosis of the safe period, thus calling for abbreviated time of protective need. It will discover measures easy to use, easy to get, cheap and sure. They may safeguard months at a time, together with extension for either sex of present office procedures to close tiny tubes, contributing permanent security. Indeed, for the peasants of Puerto Rico, China or India the means need to be almost household remedies. Premartial and extramarital intercourse made safe from risk of pregnancy may alter attitudes.

Against the second danger hanging over sex adventure—infection—steady increase in immunity is conceivable and indeed practicable. We begin to see communities, as in Scandinavia or in some states of this country, campaigning for diagnosis and treatment resembling that which minimizes diphtheria or smallpox. Due precautions can safeguard both partners, and a quick cure is available in sulpha drugs and penicillin. Like the professional prostitutes, the companions

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steadily replacing them can learn simple diagnosis of risk of infection and use prevention and protective follow-up, while any male may effectively shield himself.

Thirdly, the disgrace of detection is dwindling. Opportunities multiply for petting, and petting to climax, with no large present figure as to total outlet, but with increased resort to this practice in upper social levels and a spread to others. The stigma of illegitimacy that overhung the life of the innocent child is cleared in some countries, and will be eventually for such progeny elsewhere—as some of our states are beginning to demonstrate. And, except in the Kinsey lists, female virginity is reported as a lessening marriage prerequisite.

Therefore, the challenge to sex study to meet changes, present or pending, is called unprecedented and inescapable. It is pretty well demonstrated that conception control must become universal by the swift accumulation of evidence of overpopulation, and wide increases at a time when soil exhaustion is cause for alarm. What new remedies and protection will do to venereal disease (which huge sums spent in closing the more expensive brothels have failed to do) we can only surmise in its effect on extramarital intercourse. What the raising of economic and educational levels will do to sex attitudes, as shown by striking changes demonstrated by the Indiana survey, is a further consideration in our planning.

No evidence in the Kinsey Report is of more importance in its effect upon our writing and our programs for schedules of sex education and marriage counsel than the demonstration of the wide differences in attitude and action for various sex outlets at different levels of education, income and occupation. What upper levels may approve or condone, lower levels may strongly condemn, thus affecting success in securing histories, as well as our efforts to guide or disentangle. Here are examples. We might not have been aware that in certain large sections of the population total sex activity usually takes not more than two minutes, yet with a large proportion of orgasm by the woman. Nor would we have sensed how nudity could shock and spoil response, being regarded as obscene by many, and avoided by a number, even when dressing or undressing. Or that for a physician or nurse to ask a patient to disrobe for physical examination would outrage the mores of a group. Or about the amount of

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coitus while dressed among 57 per cent of those who never go beyond grade school.

Thus, we learn that while the deep kiss belongs to nearly 90 per cent of erotic arousal at upper levels, the lower-level male considers it "dirty, filthy and a source of disease, though he may drink from a common cup that hangs in the water pail." Mouth-genital caress is reported twice as frequent (72 per cent) at college level, mainly between spouses, as at lower high school grades. Breast caress and manual genital contacts take on the same pattern. The posture in coitus that follows the English-American type with the woman on her back and the man above is rare in other cultures, as it was in Greece and Rome and all along among Moslem peoples. The woman above, as in those cultures, is found in about one-sixth of our practice, or as a variant in a third of our upper-level people, a quarter using side-by-side postures and a tenth rear vaginal entry as variety. The general practice and the need of knowledge of group mores are exemplified by such an example as the following. A (college-graduate) teacher who takes steps to secure expulsion of an eighth grade boy, son of a mechanic, because of his intercourse with a fourteen-year-old girl, and brings disgrace on both—takes these steps in her ignorance that more than a fourth of her boys have this experience.

At lower levels masturbation may be looked upon as perversion and abnormality, whereas "the better educated portion of the population largely depends upon masturbation as premarital outlet (55-80 per cent). It draws a not insignificant portion (9 per cent) of its outlet after marriage therefrom. This is partly because of the low degree of erotic response among college-bred females. Kinsey declares that there is no evidence that the boy who begins at an early age suffers more harm than he who delays until after adolescence or later, and most scientists and clinicians are agreed that the practice does no harm at later ages.

For the active population, average frequencies in early adolescence are found to be nearly two and one-half per week, but a sixth may average four to seven times, or oftener—the highest being three times a day. The high frequencies may run long years into old age. The range of incidence runs from 99 per cent with early beginning to 93 per cent with those who start late. Most males carry on to climax

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as rapidly as possible, with activity of a minute or two, some even within twenty seconds.

One must stress such detail and brevity because it has a weighty bearing on the person's future, in conditioning the husband so that he is unable to maintain erection for the time requisite for his wife to reach her climax. It may well account for the disturbing finding in the Kinsey series that the male's average stay within the vagina is from one to two minutes, whereas the average claimed by those in my book, *A Thousand Marriages,* was more than five minutes. Have we then the courage to say of nearly inevitable self-relief that postponement of climax is a desirable technique to develop? What are the limits of hush-and-pretend?

We are given to trying to set the sex behavior pattern to a formula which we label normal or average, when patterns may be as numerous and individual as people. As counsellors we may not omit consideration of some gauge of the sex patterns of the partners in order to estimate the likelihood or unlikelihood of matching. Is this frigidity or impotence real or relievable? The problem is chiefly encountered among women. Kinsey gives disquieting confirmation of previous surveys concerning absence of orgasm among two-thirds of the wives with college backgrounds. If there is to be a happy balance of sex contacts in marriage, our present practice of manufacturing false shames and repulsions, with long repression, must face revision. With possibility of full capacity, we are training women for inhibition, 30 per cent being found by Kinsey sexually unresponsive. The young girl in the series is reported to have but one-fifth the urge or response of the boy. Therefore, what is needed to condition for adequate arousal to meet marriage adjustment may hinge on unprejudiced study of means for developing welcoming attitudes and skills looking toward well-matched mutuality in physical loving. Self-relief, present in the Davis series for two-thirds of the single women—one-half of these carrying it to orgasm—resulted in definitely better marital response than for those who had never masturbated. This was also the Dickinson-Beam finding. Homosexual women in the Henry-Dickinson series were equally responsive to men. If we should let logic make suggestions, it might be that self-relief in the female should train itself to some relation to later re-

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quirement—such as capacity for quick climax at will, in order to adapt to abbreviated future marital timing.

Out of the great volume of statistical material we have space to draw only a few data. The pattern of sex behavior is set early. The earlier activity starts, the longer it persists, preadolescent and adolescent indulgence not diminishing later adult effectiveness. Coitus constitutes 85 per cent of total sex experience. In marriage this same percentage of sex outlet is through sexual intercourse. Extramarital intercourse, reported by over a third of the males to have taken place at least once, was found to be "sporadic," with companions rather than with prostitutes, and with age-influence absent. It was ten times as frequent with grade-school education as compared with the college-grade levels, and sixteen times as frequent with day laborers as with members of the professional groups. As to premarital intercourse, one-fifth of all preadolescents report attempting it, and taking all levels, half have had experience, while by the later teens 86 per cent of those of grade-school standing have engaged in the practice, and up to three times a week. Abstinence for short periods from all sex outlets occurs in the Report, but even in a restrained group of 134 members, there was one-third to one-half the incidence of masturbation and homosexuality found in the general population, combined with a high degree of neurosis. Of sublimation this survey discovered scant evidence. The lack of penalty on sex performance, following long years of continence, as officially proclaimed by the American Medical Association and the American Social Hygiene Association, runs definitely contrary to the Kinsey findings, as has been the case in my own records. Attitudes have usually crystallized and defective action become a fixture.

We counsellors give heed to Kinsey's warning that our writings should pay more attention to attitudes because these are of more importance than stress on techniques. We fully appreciate the summons to educate parents for educating their children, and our responsibility to educate educators. Like the priesthood, we confirm many of the findings which alarmed moderate moralists and inexperienced scientists are given to denying. We note how various specialists claiming authority to define "normality" and lay down rules of behavior, such as psychoanalysts and social-hygiene officials (who deal

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largely with unbalanced and infected people) lack touch with the healthy general run of the population. Even an anthropologist, however witty or endowed with a quirk for simplification, may show "culture" limitations. Our own personal experience (and the social mores of our group) becomes our gauge for all others—as for example, when our devoted emissaries to tropic islands make clothing a religious issue, and posture in coitus part of salvation, so that this latter is known as the "missionary position." Happily we may look to a future when "morals" wed "normals"; when theology adopts biology, and the code of ethics makes friends with a sane science of sex. And so forward to trained and more tender loving, and to maintenance of marriage based on understanding.

In conclusion, I wish only as a qualified witness to state that there has been no research on sex behavior approaching the following combination of qualities until that accomplished by Kinsey and his colleagues:

1. "Scientific equanimity" and courageous directness in an undertaking running some three sessions a day for nearly ten years.

2. Thoroughness in report of exact detail of behavior concerning 12,000 individuals, with a projected program for 100,000 in twelve volumes.

3. Advisers, in planning, of the highest rank and range.

4. A code, not written, and known only to four persons.

5. A single history sheet, 8½″ x 11″, capable of holding over 520 answers, averaging over 380. This record never translated in any other way than by taking off the items on punched cards. Yet, if typed, it would cover more than thirty pages.

6. A skill for interviewing only to be appreciated by those who have given their histories, usually within two hours.

7. Wide acquaintance with sex literature, together with a library of 4,000 volumes.

8. An outlay of $2.00 per history, as compared with $350 by Hamilton, or the demand by analysts for 100 hours each at an estimated cost of $2,000 per person. And how many years?

9. Finally, a range through three educational and seven occupational levels, and a wide geographic distribution in the United States.

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Hunger Can Be Here Whole

Margaret Eaton

The unsatisfied, the unending
which gave the flower
petals,
gave (though later) to our hunger
mouth and lips.
So that it is not terrible
to come upon a skull among the ferns
(a sheep's, I think, but like a man's)
from which, flesh gone,
hollowness rings.
Hunger can be here whole.
The cavities conceived for mouth,
ear, eyes, were of no size to vent
the unsatisfied
or contain the unending.

•The poetry of MARGARET EATON has appeared in *Good Housekeeping*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the Washington *Post*, and several poetry magazines.

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American Scholar Forum . . .

IS OUR PATENT SYSTEM OBSOLETE?

Yes

Walton Hamilton

AN institution, like a human soul, may go astray. If, as an instrument, it has no heart whose devices and desires it can follow, it can be taken into captivity; and, at its master's voice, it can be made to do the things it ought not to do and to leave undone all the things which prompt its being. The course of events, human and inhuman, is replete with social inventions which have escaped the guidance of the invisible hand, to promote an end which was no part of their intention.

A dominant institution in which health has ceased to abide is the patent system. The letter-patent, or notice to all who may be concerned, of an exclusive grant at the sovereign's pleasure, is of ancient vintage. It was, along with the royal prerogative, tamed to representative government; and, by the youthful Fathers gathered at Philadelphia, it was given lodgment in an experimental document known as the Constitution. There the Congress was given "power to promote the progress of science and the useful arts." Progress was on the march; and this end—the nobility of which is attested by Jefferson, Adam Smith, Immanuel Kant—was to be attained by granting "to authors and inventors . . . for limited times . . . an exclusive right . . . to their respective writings and inventions."

The intent was as noble as an age of reason could make it. The means reflected the best common sense of the day. The era of handicraft lingered on; the progress of the useful arts was the work of solo inventors. The bait of a pecuniary reward was to render the scientific mind sensitive to the flash of genius. The inventor was to enjoy his exclusive right for a limited time, fixed by Congress at fourteen and twenty-one

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years—that is, long enough to train two or three sets of apprentices—and now come to rest at two and a half apprenticeships, or seventeen years. At the end of this period, the invention was to go into "the public domain"—a legacy of technical knowledge, upon which men of all trades could draw freely. The temporary exception to the rule against monopoly was to serve an anti-monopoly purpose.

It has not turned out that way. Over a time span of one hundred and sixty years, few human contrivances have remained true to their purposes. The conditions of invention have changed; the "sole, true and only inventor" has been superseded by a corps of technicians, working for a corporation in a laboratory. Research has become a cooperative task. The inventor, wearing the livery of his corporate master, works on a salary. The crafts and trades of old have been succeeded by industries with far-flung organizations. Our culture has been transformed by a technical revolution grounded in mechanics. It is now being played upon by a second industrial revolution springing from progress in the chemistries, metallurgy, electronics. The tempo of technical change today is to that of 1787 as the motor car is to the horse and buggy. It would be strange if a late eighteenth-century policy should fit mid-twentieth century conditions.

The plain truth is that the technological policy of the Fathers has not been kept up-to-date. We have by many Acts of Congress constantly revised our tariff, monetary, diplomatic and labor policies to meet change. We have, it is true, now and then tinkered with our patent policy. But, so far as the statute books go, the wisdom of the First Congress prevails today. It does not prevail in fact; for if conditions radically change, the policy-in-action cannot remain the same. And, if Congress refuses to make the necssary adaptation, there are interests that will. So about the letter-patent there has been built up a "patent system" which is the creation of its own beneficiaries.

In the creation of this system—the most brilliant and ingenious of modern inventions—two simple legal devices have been employed. The first is assignment; the inventor forks over all of his rights in his invention to his corporate employer. Here is a fact of outstanding significance; for, by the act of transfer, the invention passes out of the realm in which the values of science prevail, into a domain governed by the mores of business.

The second is the license; the owner of the patent—usually a corporation, not the inventor—grants to others permission to practice the invention. The license, elaborated into one of the richest of human institutions, converts the exclusive right of the inventor into a strategic weapon of economic warfare. In these days of the higher legalism, a license to use a single patent is a back number. A corporation possesses an "arsenal" of patents; the license usually permits its happy recipient to use, not one patent, but a class of patents—or even all the patents in the arsenal. The patent runs for seventeen years; the license may run for three decades or even half a century; it may include patents not yet taken out, and even inventions not yet made. It is in fact the grant by a corporation of permission to use the know-how of a particular art. And the patent-owner usually licenses a group of patents for a specific use, and usually attaches conditions to the grant. If any of the patents so used is put to another use, or if the conditions are broken or disregarded, the patent-owner is entitled to his action at law against the offender.

Let a hypothetical situation do duty for a score of cases from which it is distilled. A Doctor Septimus contrives a process for the synthetic manufacture of Vitamin V-3. He assigns his patent to the Sunshine Chemical Company, which has acquired some twenty-seven other patents in the same field. Sunshine licenses a number of corporate persons for a period of forty-nine years to make restricted use of the technology covered by its portfolio. Thus the Athens Company is permitted to use the patents in the manufacture and sale of "cooked breakfast foods"; the Corinth Company, uncooked breakfast foods; the Chios Company, horse food; the Salamis Company, food for cows, if the product is "fluid milk"; the Smyrna Company, ditto, if the

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product is "surplus milk"; the Antioch Company, food for cats, dogs and wolves; the Troy Company, food for "pet and household mice"; the Sparta Company, food for "white mice for experimental purposes only."

The pattern of permission according to use is a rich fabric. The license may—and usually does—state the amount which may be manufactured, the territory within which sales may be made, the minimum prices which must be charged. Thus the patent-owner determines who is to enter the industry and the rules under which he can carry on. If a license trespasses upon a use not granted him, or if he exceeds the quota assigned, sells in another man's territory, or cuts prices, he by doing so becomes a chiseler, and at law an "infringer." Thus the public courts may be invoked to police a system of private government.

The result, of course, is to deliver the progress of science and the useful arts into the hands of corporate enterprise. The "patent position" of a corporation becomes dominant. To fortify this position, patents must be multiplied. Improvements are themselves subject to patent; and improvements may be piled upon improvements unto the mth and nth generation. As inventions run thin, numbers make up the deficit. As the mores of business replace the scientific spirit, it becomes more important to take out patents than to make inventions. And the progress and paths of invention come to be guided, not by a search to find out, but by the necessity of winning, guarding and expanding the corporate estate.

The everyday vocabulary of the patent trade is alike colorful and telling. A "trap" patent is intended by its owner to force disclosure of inventions made by others in order that he may claim them. A "blocking" patent stands in the path of a developing art; any other person can go forward only at the pleasure of its owner. An "umbrella" patent is written in terms broad enough to cover any invention within its shadow. A "drag-net" catches and nullifies any claim of another within its reach. A "fencing" patent can be made either to guard its owner against attack, or to fence its competitor within the narrowest of boundaries. Invention is made as, if, and when it serves a corporate purpose. The progress of the useful arts is at the behest of acquisitive enterprise. The terms just recited would stump all the constitutional Fathers. Their inevitable bewilderment at such a vocabulary bears eloquent witness to the departure of a human arrangement from its noble purpose.

This objective account is not an argument for a lapse into laissez-faire. The need is not for less, but for greater, control over the progress of the useful arts. In our economy, technology is the basic fact; it determines the skills of men, and the forms into which capital is cast. The negative problem is to end the captivity of science and invention by business. For a corporation, through its exclusive control of a useful art, wins security from the hazards of the market, and invites the moth and rust which leave it a business but drain it of enterprise. In positive terms, a public policy directed at once at the advance of the useful arts and the constructive introduction of their novelties into a culture which is a going concern, is imperative.

The progress of the useful arts is the instrument of an ever-rising standard of life. It can, under proper guidance, be made to supply the surplus of material goods and of personal leisure essential to the creation of an American culture. Its role in our commonwealth is too important to allow it to remain captive to any other institution, however noble and predatory. As it has impact upon all that is society, its allegiance is only to the common good. It is of no use to talk of ridding the patent system of its abuses. It was the letter-patent, not the patent system, which the Constitution introduced into our economy; and no loving and delicate surgery upon an institution created by interests, seeking thereby to be vested, will suffice. A policy must be contrived which, under current conditions, will strip away obedience to an alien master and restore the exclusive right of the inventor to its original purpose. Why can't we be as wise in our day as the Fathers were in theirs?

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No

Casper W. Ooms

SOCIAL institutions are necessarily experimental in character. All data indicate that life itself is. Perfection remains a goal: a tidbit for philosophers, and for advocates a standard against which all things measured must fail.

Social progress is more than merely the continuing adaptation of a rather crude mechanism, man, to the difficult problem of living with himself. Were his every failure to damn him to the sentence of obsolescence he would have discarded himself many generations since. Only his patience, and the intelligence which makes him capable of the judgment that patience is worthwhile, maintain the restraint needed to preserve him. His progress has demanded more. It has demanded that he exert himself beyond the level of mere vegetative survival. It has demanded the capacity to measure values, and to contrive incentives to maintain and better them.

Human ingenuity has been nowhere better demonstrated than in the contrivance of the political and social institutions and devices demanded by the inevitable complexity of a populous earth. From elaborating the simple arrangements between tribes that met only when the seasons or nature's adversity drove them abroad, to accepting the unexpressed amenities that enable thousands of people to brush each other in the subway in a single day, man has been adequate. Aberrations from the pattern have always been sufficiently conspicuous to compel attention, notoriety and punishment. They have never led to a confession of obsolescence or a condemnation of mores substantially wholesome.

Man has always found it necessary to prohibit. His early codes contain few promises, many penalties. The condemnation was always of the person, or thing, never of the institution within which the excess was committed. When the institution itself failed of its purpose, it was swept aside with a vigor and vehemence that betokened a conviction of failure.

In constructive effort man has labored so quietly that of his more violent efforts one of the great students of man has been compelled to admit that "every revolution suffers a collapse at the point where reconstruction should begin."* How well he wrought for himself, man was not always aware. That he could tailor any political institution to meet the formless needs of a society more distant than tomorrow, when no man could measure the form of the economy of the day, remains no less a miracle than that of life itself.

The patent system that man has framed is no exception. It is no code or simple lexicon that he has written. It is an institution borrowed from a long history within which, when the sovereign was restrained against the promiscuous grant of monopolies to favorites and friends, the institution was preserved as an incentive to insure the introduction and publication of novel industrial techniques. It was no creation of the authors of our Constitution. The record of their proceedings indicates that there was no debate and little difference with respect to the desirability of the constitutional provision for promotion of "the progress of science and useful arts" by the granting of patents. The English and continental patent systems were nourishing an industrial activity of which all were aware.

The first Congress that met wrote a patent law, and three members of the first cabinet of our first president administered it. To-

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*Sumner, *Folkways*, Sec. 90.

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day there is a more elaborate patent statute, but above it are thousands of decisions—defining, tempering, amplifying, justifying and criticizing the patent system. At Washington, a large bureau sifts the efforts of the many who respond to the incentives which the patent system extends. All these things together are our patent system, and that it should be something less than perfect is merely its human birthright.

What does this patent system do? To the inventor it offers a vague and unnegotiable promise that if he brings forth something new and publishes it to the world, he may be entrusted with the exclusive right to exploit the invention for seventeen years. No reward is fixed. None of the hazards of economic life are waived. The invention must justify itself against a myriad of available substitutes, and if it survives the tests of competition its owner may profit from it.

What is the patent's cost to the public? The public relinquishes, for the life of the patent, the benefits that may attend the free practice of the invention, the possibility that others than the inventor may independently "invent" the same invention, and also the occasional risk that if the invention may be freely practiced none will submit to the risks that are involved.

The public benefits, of course, in the publication of the invention—so that when seventeen years have passed and the sanctions of the grant have withered, all who would practice the invention may find their instruction in the patent document.

Nor is that all. In an economy founded on the principle that enterprise should be constantly refreshed by the infusion of new and small businesses, and that big business is an inevitable evil to be jealously watched and circumscribed, no other device has half the merit of the patent to accomplish those ends. No small business intent upon developing a new technique or introducing a new product could found itself and survive against the competition of well-entrenched and large establishments, if the latter could freely copy any novelty that appeared. Only the patent possesses the strength to insure that the patent owner shall not be immediately overwhelmed by the advantages that accrue to the larger manufacturer with a national advertising budget and its capillary distribution system.

If the patent owner stands alone and in need of capital, the patent may be his only resource to secure his lenders, and only its transferability makes it any asset at all. If he has no taste for enterprise and prefers to make a simple sale of his grant, that too can be effected only because the patent is transferable. Or if he prefers that the powers extended to him by the patent grant be exercised by others, he can license them, and through them make the invention more widely available than he could by his own unaided enterprise.

Whatever the scheme by which the patentee seeks to exercise the powers conferred upon him, his document embraces but a fragment of economic power. All about him he is beset with inventors intent upon equalling or bettering his skill, and the more valuable his invention the greater is the compulsion upon those who would, even while avoiding the grasp of the patent, make a better mousetrap. In this way the patent forces a continuing race among competitors, who, deprived of this compulsion, might be content with effortless copying and worthless embellishment. In a world where all might freely copy, only the witless would hazard their time and effort in invention.

Technology does not wait while the patent owner collects his reward. Every patent contains both a teaching that may suggest a better way and a threat that those who do no find the better way may be left behind. Technological progress feeds on both.

Thus does the patent serve: first as an incentive to invention and disclosure; second as an armor to the newly-born enterprise against the formidable superiority of established business; and finally as a goad and whip upon rivals to excel. The public is heir to the entire estate. It procures a growing literature of its techniques, the blessings of an economy in which even the small may survive, and an ever-widening variety of methods and goods by which its material life is enriched.

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This is not accomplished without some abuse. The corporate entity has made possible most of the economic evils of which we complain. The stock certificate and other means of evidencing ownership or indebtedness without the feudal ceremony of physically sitting upon the property, have enabled the imaginative to rob entire generations of their wealth. Even the lowly contract does not deny its facilities to those of evil heart. Every legal device which man has been able to devise has been subject to manipulation in some measure.

This abuse has, however, not led to a judgment that these institutions are obsolete. The same society whose needs have called these devices into being has kept them in its service, slowly adapting them to its needs by the day-to-day decision of its courts, occasionally confining them by statutory controls.

The patent system has not escaped this adaptation. Doctrines that the patent owner yesterday would have condemned, as stripping him of his reward, are today accepted as incidental burdens of the patent. Limitations upon the power of the patentee in the transfer and licensing of his grant are uttered by the same courts that find it repeatedly necessary to engross restrictions upon less pretentious contracts. Some reaction to the expanding power conferred by the patent merely by virtue of the expanding industrial economy in which it delivers its impact, appears in an increasing reluctance to recognize the presence of invention in all but the unimaginable. Excesses favoring the patentee are followed by excesses which would cut him down.

That the patent system suffers the familiar inhibitions of bureaucracy in its growth is inevitable. Administered in many of its aspects, as it must be, by a host of civil servants who have learned its liturgy but have never become acquainted with its purpose—it has become burdened with a depressing formalism that sometimes thwarts its purpose, and frequently breeds the small injustices that thrive in human relations.

Grant these deficiencies, and the patent system still measures up to the duties for which it was designed. "The progress of science and useful arts" has maintained an ever-increasing pace, and the industrial economy has been immeasurably enriched. Had this progress been impeded by the patent system, evidences of this failure would be at every hand. Or had the patent system even failed part of its original promise, the demonstration would be forthcoming.

Our Constitution contains many promises that are today only partly fulfilled, promises of equal suffrage and civil rights, of truly free speech and other blessings, but we do not charge to these institutions our imperfections in their operation. Nor do we suggest that they are obsolete.

In the Winter Number . . .

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM will present Irwin Edman and E. D. Myers in a discussion of the question, "Is Religion the Sole Source of Spiritual Values?"

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The Reader Replies . . .

The Reader Replies *regularly carries comments by readers on the contents of the preceding American Scholar Forum. In the Winter number, for example,* The Reader Replies *will contain letters about the debate in the current number on the subject: "Is Our Patent System Obsolete?" In addition, miscellaneous letters of comment on various articles appear in this department. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *5 East 44 Street, New York 17, N. Y., and should not exceed 300 words in length. Hitherto, we have not refused to print longer comments, but the volume of letters has increased to such a degree that it is now necessary to insist on the 300 word maximum. The only exceptions will be comments on the previous Forum. Because of limitations of space, the editors cannot guarantee to print all communications received. Letters intended for publication in the Winter number should be mailed before October 15. (Editor)*

WORLD FEDERATION—IS IT A PRACTICABLE GOAL?

The Need and the Lack

There is little that I can add to the exchange between Mr. Van Doren and Mr. Lippmann, with the latter of whom I agree.

Mr. Lippmann assures Mr. Van Doren that under no conceivable conditions will the Soviet Union now enter a federation on conditions acceptable to us, or we a federation acceptable to the Russians. Mr. Van Doren replies that he does not know that this is true. Of course, as Justice Holmes has said, we have been cocksure of many things which were not so, and that about as near as we can come to certainty is to be willing to bet our lives—this time quite realistically—on an outcome. I think we can do so here.

A world government could hardly perform its functions without powers in all parts of the world not much short of those exercised by our federal government throughout our Union. The drafts which I have seen of world government charters, although sometimes vague, bear out this belief. If one begins to think concretely about the grant and exercise of the powers of a world bureau of revenue, or federal reserve system, or a world Taft-Hartley Act, or world bureau of investigation, or Hatch Act, or world industrial recovery administration, or agricultural adjustment administration, or atomic energy commission—to suggest only a few—we come pretty close to knowing that Mr. Lippmann is right.

Even in our own experience we have found fundamental issues like those of 1861 hard to adjust within the framework of governmental procedure. The differences

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we are concerned with now are a good deal more numerous and deep.

I agree with Mr. Lippmann that the establishment of our own federal government and its survival of civil war is not a safe analogy. As Mr. Churchill has observed, "In the tasks which the Almighty sets his humble servants, things hardly ever happen the same way twice over, or if they seem to do so, there is some variant which stultifies undue generalization."

The fact that other courses of action have their difficulties and hazards does not prove that world federation is a practicable goal now.

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Jurisdiction—Not Federation

The philosopher Nietzsche once said: "The coldest monster of the world, the State, pretends to be the most important being on earth, and—people believe it!" Certainly, not Mr. Van Doren. His statements that no single state can save the world, that no single state is even able to save its own country, and that state diplomacy, if left alone, cannot preserve peace, are undoubtedly true. Nevertheless, the idea of a world federation is not the practicable goal apt to outmaneuver the trends toward disunity, toward indiscriminate universal mass murder, called war. In so far I agree with Mr. Lippmann.

Those who expect the solution of national or international conflicts from the creation of more or less comprehensive governmental organizations, are mistaken. They overestimate the efficiency of legal concepts. It is true, good laws can have good consequences, and bad laws can do much harm. But as a whole, law remains a matter of technique: the best tailor cannot achieve a stately posture for his customer—except by means of deception—if the body is distorted. Furthermore, the larger a governmental structure is, the more doubtful is its efficiency. Democracy works best within local communities. Pre-world-war European states developed a high degree of efficiency within the administration of their relatively small countries. The United States of America govern and administer the realm of a continent; already this scope of government shows fundamental shortcomings. And the international political organizations, did or do they work? Failures which we observe are not only the results of human inefficiency, they originate mainly from fundamental historic, social, economic and political differences within the organization. The bigger the organization, the greater the conflicts. As long as the antagonism of social and economic structures continues to exist between the nations of the world, no legal device of world government will work.

Propaganda for world government distracts public opinion from an actually practicable goal: compulsory international jurisdiction. For about half a century we have had international courts. However, the statesmen, particularly those of the big nations, refuse to "endanger their sacred sovereign rights" by bowing to the compulsory decision of independent and impartial judges. Different from world government, world jurisdiction accepts the fact that current government and current diplomacy remain in the hands of the states. Compulsory jurisdiction interferes only when diplomacy fails; then the Court would have the final decision. Different from the measures taken by a political body like the UN, the decisions of a court are made by trained impartial judges who already in national cases have become accustomed, if necessary, to decide against their own governments; their independence could be secured by entrusting their election to national supreme courts. What about atomic energy control by such a type of court?

Compulsory international jurisdiction, not the idea of world federation, is the only *legal* device apt to support—not to secure—world peace. Maybe, after a long period of peaceful compulsory jurisdiction (if we are fortunate enough to enjoy this blessing) we can prepare for world federation.

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The First Problem

Mr. Lippmann, to use a legal phrase, has entered a plea of confession and avoidance. He agrees that world government is necessary, but he says we can't have it without "a whole series of wars."

No one has more clearly exposed the deficiencies of a league than has Mr. Lippmann in his previous writings, nor more clearly pointed out the necessity of a federal world government if there is to be any hope of enduring peace.

Mr. Lippman now says that he is still on the side of the angels—but that he does not have wings, as does Mr. Van Doren, and he has to hop along on the ground. I think Mr. Lippmann does himself an injustice. He has wings, as he has long proved, but they are paralyzed by his fear that flight is impractical.

The gist of his argument is that wars are inevitable and will continue until a world order is achieved by conquest—a Pax Romana.

That confirms what some of us world federalists have been saying: that there is *going* to be a world government, and our only possible choice is what kind of a government it will be, and how it will be achieved. Will it be a reasonable and limited system arrived at by intelligence and cooperation, or will it be a despotism imposed by conquest?

Maybe Mr. Lippmann is right—that mankind is so incompetent that a world juridical order cannot be achieved by intelligent cooperation. But if he is right, I would like to have history—if there *is* any history—record that at least we had the intelligence and courage to *try*.

The first place to try is right here in the United States. Russia is not the first hurdle. The United Sates has pitched its strategy upon the old diplomatic game of power politics: peace by power enforced through a league by the unanimous agreement of the three great powers. So long as that present U.S. policy continues, Russia cannot be expected to cooperate. Only when the United States comes clean, and offers to go along on a *real* world order as part of a general settlement of *all* the issues between the two countries, will the issue have been squarely put to Russia. We should abandon our philosophy of despair, stop using Russia as an alibi, and search our own souls, and *try*.

Our government, it seems to me, pitched this thing on the outworn base of nineteenth-century diplomacy, and the present administration is so entangled that perhaps Mr. Lippmann is right, until we can get a breath of fresh air in our administration.

Mr. Lippmann is worrying about Russia alone. The first problem is not Russia: it is the United States.

W. T. Holliday
The Standard Oil Company
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Cleveland 15, Ohio

Wings to Win

The FORUM on World Government between Messrs. Van Doren and Lippmann was very stimulating. Being a Federalist, I am naturally inclined toward Mr. Van Doren's thesis.

After such an admission, I should like to challenge Mr. Lippmann's beliefs, i.e.: "Truly independent states" do not federate except under force, and that in any event, the Soviets would never join a federation under conditions acceptable to the United States.

Regarding the first problem, I understand that in the case of Bismarck's Reich, although force was necessary for federation, a considerable popular sentiment for federation had existed previously, which made the outcome more certain. Perhaps, in the face of an overwhelming popular demand, no force may be necessary.

Secondly, whether or not Russia and America will agree on the terms of a Federation may depend upon how latent American opinion may be influenced to become articulate, and upon possible further fragmentation within the Communist sphere. In any event, whether or not Stalin and his Politburo would join a World Government is immaterial—to the extent that it is better to *know* that there are two worlds, rather

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than to be under the illusion that there may be only one. At least, the lines would be clear cut, and the world's people could rally around a cause that they understood.

Mr. Lippmann eschews "paradise," with its attendant dependance upon the miraculous, in spite of the fact that the unbelievable has always happened, and thereafter, has been taken for granted. Considered thus, the life and doings of Charles XII of Sweden, or the spread of the early Christian church in the face of the Roman Empire, seem impossible, except that we read them as history.

Seeing that fact is stranger than fiction, I roguishly suggest that Mr. Lippmann think further on the matter, and "win his wings."

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Two Questions

When we ask, "Is world government possible?" we are, I think, asking one of two quite different questions. The first of these is basic: Is world government logically possible? Does it suggest a way of life consistent with what we know about human behavior and the social institutions man forms for himself? The second question is simply one of probability: Is world government a likely outcome of the present state of world affairs? I believe the answers to these questions are "yes" and "no," respectively.

We are free to assume that world government is logically possible since neither the social or biological sciences give us reason to believe that man could not adapt himself to this type of political organization. However, I believe that we must also add that the present state of affairs in the world does not indicate that the majority of mankind are willing to make such a change.

It seems almost trivial to say that education must prepare us to realize the necessity of world government if peace is to be maintained. Yet, although our educational system seems inadequate to the task, those who are in a position of intellectual leadership must face the responsibility which history has literally thrown in their lap. It is not enough that we should abandon isolationism. It is not enough that we should recognize our part in rebuilding the destruction of the war. American interest in world affairs should not require the hypermotivation currently provided by a Communist bogyman. We will have world government only when enough people are thinking in world terms. This is not the case today. We are still nationalists, and most of us intend to remain nationalists. We need not be reminded of the rest. The foreign policy of national states is made up of power politics, "incidents," threats of war, and finally war itself.

If man cannot change his manner of behavior to avoid the periodic massacre of war, it is biologically sound that he should become extinct. World government is no certain guarantee of utopia, but it seems to offer a better chance for peace and happiness than a world of national states. If man is unable, or worse, unwilling, to work toward this end, his chances of survival are not especially promising.

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Formidable Problems

It is rather difficult to determine just what Professor Van Doren proposes concerning the creation of a world federation. He begins by saying that world federation is a practicable goal to aim at now. If by this he means that in some indeterminate future time a world federation should be evolved, few persons of good will would quarrel with him. If, on the other hand, he advocates the creation of a world federation in the immediate future, agreement with him will be far less general. It is the latter purpose which is implicit, if not explicit, in his article.

As a first step to the realization of a world

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federation Professor Van Doren proposes the immediate amendment of the United Nations Charter to provide for the surrender by the component nations "of whatever portion of their sovereignty is the portion with which they may commit suicide." This is a large order, and in the light of the recent history of the United Nations is of course quite unrealistic.

As a second step, he proposes the working out of "something like a constitution or at any rate a body of law with instruments to enforce it upon individuals." The difficulty here is to translate these generalities into specific proposals. Presumably this hypothetical world constitution would provide for a democratically elected legislature. Just how will the representation of the various nations in this body be determined? Can anyone suppose that we would agree to a representation less than that of Russia, or that Russia would agree to accept a representation less than that of the United States? Again Professor Van Doren calls for "instruments to enforce" the authority of the world federation upon individuals. This calls for a United Nations military and naval force. For more than a year the United Nations has been struggling with this problem, with little or no success.

These are only a few of the formidable problems that have to be solved, before a world federation can be realized.

A federated world brought about by consent is a beautiful dream for the immediate if not the distant future. The ideological differences which divide the world today render any attempt at peaceful federation wholly impractical. If federation is to be brought about by force, war is inevitable.

The most unfortunate aspect of the policy put forward by Professor Van Doren is that it is calculated to arouse hopes which cannot be realized, and the ensuing disillusionment may well lead to a revival of isolationism in this country, thereby nullifying all of the progress that has been made in recent years in bringing the American people to a realization of our obligations as a world power.

Nelson P. Mead
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Wings and a Hop, Skip and Jump

Let me take up Mr. Van Doren's argument with Mr. Lippmann by observing that the time has come for all of us to sprout the wings ascribed to my friend Mark by his distinguished adversary; an "occasional hop, skip and jump" will no longer serve.

In Mr. Lippmann's vein, it was suggested recently by a UN-itself-can-do-the-job protagonist that we must learn to jump fifteen feet before we try to jump fifteen miles. If a leap of fifteen feet, or even a hop, skip and jump shattering the Olympic record, were enough, none of us could resist the "gradualist" approach. But the atomic bomb is here, and biological weapons are here, and N-2-plus rockets are here, and there is no defense against them, so we *have* to jump fifteen miles; we *have* to fly. As Mr. Van Doren's brother Carl remarked at a world government meeting the other day, "History is slow only when it has time to be."

Can it be forgotten that we Americans, with the help of British, Canadian, Hungarian, French, Danish, Italian and German scientists, actually brought to realization in three short years the dreams of alchemists and physicists and chemists through more than a millenium? We split the atom! We *had* to, because we knew that Nazi science would achieve that miracle if we didn't. Is world order any less imperative?

The defeatism which accepts as inevitable "at least one, and probably a whole series of wars to end all wars" is so obscenely immoral that the failure of pulpit, press and radio to denounce it scathingly is hard to understand. Perhaps spiritual torpor (that acedia which is one of the "seven deadly sins") has blighted more fine minds and ardent hearts than we had realized.

Most of us have no illusions about the character of the Soviet regime (and some of us are finding it difficult to cling to what may be our illusions about the American State Department), but *can* there be general agreement with Mr. Lippman's suggestion that there are no "conceivable conditions" under which we and the Russians could agree to seek our security *with* the rest of the world rather than *against* the rest

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of the world? I am deeply certain that, if only the issues can be adequately presented to them, the American people will reject any such counsel of despair.

If world federal government *is* the only way to abolish war, as Mr. Lippmann agrees, then who dares deny that it can be achieved? Of course, the difficulties seem overwhelming. It was, to be sure, a "slothful man" who declared, "There is a lion in the way," but so far as world government is concerned, he is quite right. There *is* a lion in the way: a lion compounded of fanatical nationalism and ignorance and apathy and malice and misunderstanding, but beyond that lion lies the City of Man and we *shall* gain that City.

A.J.G. Priest
Georgian Inlet Post Office
Ontario, Canada

Mr. Lippmann and Alice

Mr. Lippmann and others who take his position, or one similar to it, agree that nothing short of World Government will abolish war; but they say we can't possibly get World Government now unless we impose it by force, and they are against that. So they settle for the limited objective of "preventing or postponing the next few wars," and for that purpose they want us to build up our muscles and collect friends who will be committed to our side—in case.

So what? Postulating their limited objective as the best we can hope for, what gives the best promise of reaching it? I suggest this: An offer in good faith to the rest of the world to help, even to take the lead, in assembling a convention to draft a constitution for a world federation, giving it adequate authority and power to preserve the peace. Would such an offer start a war? Nonsense.

What would happen?

The rest of the world would unanimously reject the offer, and we would have gained or lost nothing.

Or so few would accept that no document drawn by them and us could be regarded as a World Constitution, and we would have made a slight gain by having given evidence of our willingness to pay the price of peace.

Or enough would accept to make the meeting of delegates and the result of their deliberations the first genuine and potent effort of mankind to organize the world for peace. A first long step to World Government would be achieved.

But, says Mr. Lippmann, Russia would not be among the accepters, and the world would have two camps. What in the name of heaven does he think it has now? What course other than the one suggested offers as bright a hope of achieving the limited objective of "preventing or postponing the next few wars?" That is the minimum reasonably to be expected of it; and if by a miracle it gives us more—a real start toward world federation—that will be velvet. The contention of Mr. Lippmann and others like him, that the sure way to start a war is to give the world the best possible proof that we are ready to do everything in our power to prevent one, sounds like a quotation from *Alice in Wonderland*, but I saw it not there but in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR—and plenty of other places.

Rex Stout
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MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

The Reconstruction of Religion

While Mr. Nathanson, in discussing the "monopolistic method of authority," points out that in democracy and science a competent person can find out for himself what is true by investigation, he does not seem to recognize that this testing process is at all present in religion. It cannot be denied that religion—regarded as creed,

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or organization, or ceremonials, or regulations made by councils or bishops, or popes, or tribal chiefs and medicine men—shows features of intolerant absolutism. But is it not true that religion, regarded as goodness in character and life, is gained by dealing with, making an experiment with, the Infinite Divine Spirit? Does not personal experience lie at the core of genuine religious conviction? The true Christian spirit cannot be imposed from without, but is developed within a man.

The author's conclusion is: "We say that though the universe slay us, still we must trust—not in something beyond or outside ourselves, but in the power of people together to take the raw materials of this universe and make from them the instruments of our growth and freedom." His purpose is religious, and in that I am with him 100 per cent. Surely it will be of advantage to have an end to bigotry, intolerance and strife between sects in the religious field, and to see if all persons of good will cannot unite in earnest efforts to make a better world. And success in this task requires that our minds should be given to study of daily practical problems, rather than too exclusively directed toward, and concerned about, the hereafter. The aim here is altogether high and right. But a weakness in his conclusion seems to me to be that there is in it no expressed recognition of need felt for God, nor any expectation of aid from faith in God or from prayers to, or worship of, God. It seems all human and self-dependent, and in this respect is wrong and deficient.

I fear that those who put their hand to the plough in this hard-sodded field of human betterment, trusting only in themselves and not feeling that the Almighty is there with them still, however difficult the going may be—will become discouraged, look backward and quit, showing themselves unworthy workers.

The author's objective is a grand one, and it is my belief that he and all who earnestly and constantly shall labor with him to gain it will be able in time to see and to trust not only themselves and a mysterious universe—*it, a thing, a power,* but, sticking to their principles and job, will eventually declare, like Job in the spiritual drama, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." (Job 42:5)

Benjamin W. Arnold, Jr.
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Big Wind

In the Winter issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR there appears some reading material under the heading "Big Wind." This is titled on the cover page as "A Poem." Who calls this a poem, Theodore Roethke or THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR? What is poetry about it? Kindly consult Webster's Dictionary as to the meaning of "poem" and "poetry." It looks more like a few hastily scribbled notes of the professor for a lecture than a poem. Perhaps Mr. Roethke does not consider this poetry; perhaps some prankster has sent this in for publication unknown to Mr. Roethke. In that case THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR has been sucked in. Surely the magazine of the intelligentsia ought to be more discriminatory in the selection of literary pabulum offered its readers. Or, if Mr. Roethke considers this poetry, then this and other poems, which recently appeared in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, are an evidence that American literature is in for a period of decadence such as periodically plagued Greek, Latin, Germanic or other national poetry.

May the Muses again breathe on the dead bones that something of their art be revived!

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A Biologist Looks at War

Mr. Zahl, in his article, "A Biologist Looks at War," (Winter, 1947-48) adopts a terminology which may be misleading to people who are not biologists; it is the terminology of teleology.

Examples are easily found in his article:

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"It was only when life set aside the concept of individualism as its sole guiding principle and began to experiment with the social idea . . ." or again, "It was the need for seeking food . . . that led the multicellular animals to select weapons of aggression. . . ."

It is my understanding that modern science has abandoned as untenable the idea that either plants or animals have developed new habits of living, or more particularly new bodily structures, as a result of any willful decision on the part of the plant or animal concerned. For instance, it is hard to believe that tigers said to themselves, "We need long claws and big teeth in order to be better prepared to capture our food," and that they then went ahead and grew the long claws and big teeth as a consequence of their decision. Yet that could logically be assumed, starting from the second quotation that I have taken from Mr. Zahl.

Without doubt, Mr. Zahl does not himself believe in teleology; his use of quotation marks around "choice" (p. 19) indicates that he does not. However, his use of the terminology of teleology is likely to have misled many who are not biologists and who are therefore not acquainted with the weaknesses and implications of teleology.

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Is This Education?

I have just read, with considerable interest, the AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM, "Is This Education?" in the Summer, 1947, issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

Unless one knew the facts, one would assume from reading each of the six articles that the word "veteran" is synonymous with the word "man." Inasmuch as approximately 3 per cent of the armed forces of World War II were women, and these veterans are participating in the Government's educational program to the same proportionate extent as men, it would seem that the opinion of at least one woman GI student would have added to the interest and value of the FORUM. The geographical distribution of the six authors, the fact that three were graduate students and three undergraduate, and that they represented various aspects of armed service, suggests a commendable editorial intention to achieve a composite veteran's viewpoint. The omission of a woman veteran's contribution was, therefore, the more disappointing to me.

Should you have occasion to plan a future symposium on veterans' problems or interests, may I suggest that a spokesman for the women's segment be included? These veterans served in every major theater of operations as well as in thousands of domestic Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard installations. Their contribution to postwar America may be proportionately even greater than that of their brothers in uniform for the reasons (1) that their services were entirely voluntary, and (2), with the exception of nurses, that they were pioneering in novel occupational fields. It is reasonable to assume that their enthusiasm and resourcefulness will continue to characterize their civilian efforts, with direct benefit to our national society.

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American Foreign Policy

In the discussion on "American Foreign Policy," I think that, on the whole, Mr. Padover covered the ground more adequately. I would like to emphasize one point in particular—the contradiction between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. on the very crucial matter of "democracy." Neither country is anywhere near being a democracy in the ethical sense. Civil liberties, in our sense, hardly exist in Russia. On the other hand, in this country, Congress, through the House Committee on Un-American Activities, is destroying them, aided by tub-thumpers for 100 per cent Americanism, feudalistic racists, and other anti-minority groups. Political democracy cannot be said, with accuracy, to function in a country in which, in poll-tax states, the Ku Klux Klan

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prevents Negroes from voting by an open threat of bloodshed. Economic democracy does not exist where Negroes and Jews are discriminated against in jobs and wages. Social democracy does not exist in a country in which, over large areas, Negroes are given only the most miserable opportunities for education, and are pushed off into slums without even ordinary sanitary provisions (as right here in Florida). When I visited Russia some years ago I found absolutely no evidence of any racial discrimination, with respect to jobs, education, or cultural and residential opportunities.

I am disgusted with the conscious, or perhaps unconscious, glib pharisaism with which our leaders shout from the housetops that we are the champions everywhere of "liberty" and "democracy," and yet use our money and our techniques to bolster fascist governments in Greece and Iran; worst of all in China, where the miscalled "Nationalist" government has become a stench in the nostrils for its wholesale corruption, inefficiency and cruelty. There we throw away good money after bad, waste civilian and military supplies to keep going a rotting system because we think thereby to stop Russia; whereas our continued support will probably have just the opposite effect.

I am opposed to Communist infiltration at home; but I think it would be the part of both decency and wisdom for us to clean up our own backyards, before we claim to be all white and accuse the U.S.S.R. of being all black.

The United States is committed, by its constitution, to the defense of civil liberties, based on the ethical principle of the inalienable dignity and worth of the individual person. In the face of the Soviet's relentless pressures and infiltrations, ERP is indispensable to the defense of these liberties. All attempts at appeasement and compromise have proved failures. We are engaged in a cold war with Soviet Russia which may turn into a hot, shooting war. This is the disagreeable fact.

There are ominous signs of hysteria and confusion of thought in these United States. The vote, by the House of Representatives, to include Franco Spain in the benefits of ERP was evidence that a majority of our chosen representatives are ready to throw principles to the wind and grab at any stick to beat the Communist dog with. For Franco Spain is a thorough-going police state. The attempt to include in the ERP specifications that the countries participating must abandon socialism for the so-called American Way of "free enterprise," that is, *laissez-faire*, or the unrestricted rule of the profit motive, is evidence that what a good many businessmen mean by liberty is simply the liberty of everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost. This attitude blandly ignores the fact that the enormous growth of mass production and increasing concentration of control, on the part of both Capital and Labor, make imperative the increase of public controls in the interest of the common run of people. The choice is between either irresponsible private controls for the maximum of group profits, or public controls for the common good. Unrestricted free enterprise is a dated and dying ideology. The two real ideologies in conflict are the Middle Way, preserving civil liberties, and the thorough-going centralized State Socialism of Soviet Russia. Marx and Lenin said the State would wither away under communism. In fact it is Leviathan.

The cold war is that between Social Democracy in the Western sense and the Communist Leviathan. Let us be clear on this crucial issue. If a shooting war comes, probably both will go by the board; its survivors will lose interest in ideologies; they will be immersed in the brute struggle to survive.

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The forum discussion on foreign policy by Vera Micheles Dean and Saul K. Padover in the Winter quarterly I found most interesting; but since I didn't find in the READER REPLIES any letter expressing something of the concern I feel about the whole matter, I determined to "take my typewriter in hand" to let you know about it even though I am not (yet) a subscriber.

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The differences which we are magnifying and blowing up into a justification for war are due fundamentally, it seems to me, to the Schism in our Soul. Our religion is that of Christianity; even though we repudiate it, flout it, disbelieve it and even reject it, we can't get away from its teaching entirely. Our practice, particularly in the field of economics, is pagan and materialistic. Christ said, "Love one another; do good to thine enemy," and taught we must be unselfish, to kill our little egos and our vanity, to think first of the good of the whole. Our economic code is based on the assumption that by serving our own self-interest, we automatically serve the general welfare.

We know that doesn't work, now. And we've come to the secret knowledge that Christianity and capitalism are diametrically opposed. We act selfishly but can't help feeling guilty, knowing vaguely it isn't Christian, that maybe we really don't want to be Christian but must cling to the label as proof of our civilization. So we're divided in our innermost being and can't stay the sinister powers (economic) which make no pretense of religion and act frankly as pagan powers, for pride, privilege and possessions. Nowhere in our foreign policy among accredited officials does one find any spiritual insight, though Marshall at first came close to it.

One could go on to develop this theme, but quite a few writers these days are aware of the sickness of our society though they haven't, to my knowledge, come right out and said just where that sickness is located. The locus is in our own Soul. We can't do what we know is right because we really want to do the selfish thing we know is wrong. If we were focused, spiritually unified and religiously motivated, there isn't a difficulty we couldn't overcome, no matter how "bad" Russia is.

For as Dean Inge once said, "Ancient civilizations were killed by barbarians who were imported. We breed our own." If Russia is bad, we're a good deal responsible for her, just as we were a good deal responsible for breeding Hitler and Mussolini.

The second thought which concerns me (and must concern many others, for the older I get the more I find I rarely have an original or lone idea) is that the U.S. handling of our affairs with Russia will lead to war if the findings of Toynbee regarding the civilizations of mankind have any validity. We're not doing any better than ancient Assyrians, Babylonians, Hellenes or Malaysians in this matter. And fratricidal war, he points out, not only extinguishes the victim but fatally injures the victor, atomic bomb or no atomic bomb.

The money spent for militarism prevents money spent for correcting social "enormities" done to a people. (Look what is being done to labor, to the victims of the industrial revolution in terms of slums, bad health, schooling, occupational opportunities, etc. These social sins have in the past bred social and political revolution. Aren't we drifting toward that?) It prevents money needed for maintaining the mechanics of a society—for the maintaining or building of irrigation systems, for instance. Militarism helps a nation commit suicide. And isn't this what we are contemplating just for "self-defense"? Already the West finds water a crucial problem, but cannot get the irrigation system it needs so vitally because of our preoccupation with the military, and putting over militarism. Is this a portent of disintegration?

We seem to be taking all the wrong turns both at home and abroad, and the source of the action lies in ourselves. It's a treason of the Soul. The only answer is religion, for that is the only thing that can cure a soul's sickness and give it focus, renewed energy and remake the man. Toynbee, Trueblood, Heimann and others are right. But so is Andrew Osborn when he says in *Christianity in Peril*, that Christianity may not survive unless it is literally remade into a religion of veracity. Maybe the answer is a new syncretistic religion, as many have suggested.

I wanted to go on to set down more ideas but I shall leave it to professional writers—perhaps among contributors to THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR who are as keenly aware that

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UNDER WHATEVER SKY

Irwin Edman

Softer, Kinder, Safer

Softer, kinder, safer! The endearing and insinuating phrase caught my eye one day in the subway—while riding which artery one comes to forget (as one does in cities anyway) that one is under the sky at all. I am not certain what it was that was softer, kinder, safer. I am reasonably clear it was some form of soap suds, but one has been able to note for a long time now the tender and modulated promise of any number of advertisements which guarantee that things will be smooth, that they will be gentle, that they will be safe. One would think that one was living in the midst of a jungle, where life was marked by the jagged, the violent and the insecure. To read the advertisements, one would think that except for the given product advertised, all one's food came to one in rough chunks; that the soap generally available was made of pure grit; and that the ordinary run of toothpastes were likely to explode the moment they were put upon one's toothbrush.

Well, maybe we are living in a jungle. Obviously, primitive man could have felt no more cosmic insecurity than most self-denominated civilized men feel at the present time. Life is comfortable but not soft; it is organized but not smooth; it is ingeniously complicated but not secure. Time was when in a rough world one was invited to escape to some sanctuary or some retreat, but the advertisers have made it easier. One does not have to move now. The softness, the smoothness, the safety, are brought in packages right into the home. Perhaps in a desperate emergency one will have to walk as far as the nearest drugstore, but now that the War is over there are home deliveries again. The telephone is right at hand. When life gets too complicated, all that is necessary is to dial a number and leave a general order for the very best they have in softness, kindness and safety. And right away, please!

Children's Department

Well! I doubt it!

I had just handed to my friend's seven-year-old son a copy of Kipling's *Just So Stories*. He looked at the title carefully, read it aloud reflectively. "Just so stories," he repeated with a certain patent reserve. "Well, I doubt it!"

I have given up predicting what careers my friends' children are going to grow up to, but I see in seven-year-old Edward the makings of a literary critic or a rational philosopher. *Just So Stories* indeed! Edward will never be taken in by the apparatus of photographic realism; not Zola nor James Farrell, even, is going, by means of piled-up facts, to persuade him that this is the way, or actually was *la vraie vérité*.

I can, again, see young Edward growing up to be a fine, hard-shelled empirical critic. Theologians had better beware of coming along with grandiose mythologies telling Edward about the origins and destinies of things. Just so, indeed! I should be surprised if Edward went so far as to say, "Well, only just."

I think, on the other hand, books that are frankly fanciful, that pretend to be nothing more than myth or whimsical images or poetic transmutations of life, might win Edward's approval. He is well on the way to keeping a firm distinction in his mind between literal fact and imagination. I suspect a book called *Just As If Stories* would seem to him less questionable. He can understand delightful whoppers, but he does not want all this nonsense about their being true. After all, he has reached the Age of Reason.

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Want to see how high I can bounce?

My hostess had left the living room for the moment, and her six-year-old daughter, Daphne, was seated demurely on the divan. She looked at me speculatively for a moment, as if wondering what subject of conversation could possibly interest me. Then she said suddenly, quite loudly and without preamble: "Want to see how high I can bounce?" I promptly admitted a fanatic curiosity on that subject, and she bounced quite high and graciously accepted my compliments on her achievement.

Well, I suppose I should not be drawing morals from Daphne's feat (I should perhaps draw a moral from my own conduct, for her mother, entering the room that moment, said ruefully she had been trying for three months to break Daphne of the habit of bouncing on the expensive and somewhat fragile divan. I made a note that I should never encourage the children of my friends without a visa from their parents.)—but I cannot help thinking that a large motivation of human conduct is summarized in Daphne's exclamation, "Want to see how high I can bounce?" In society, in government, in literature. Never mind that one bounces back down, and that people soon get accustomed to the height of one's bounce and pay no further attention to it. Never mind, either, the virtuosity that goes into our particular kind of bounce—if nobody watches it, a good deal of the spring goes out of the bounce itself. One becomes rather bored with the bouncing oneself.

Daphne was annoyed with me when a few minutes later she asked with the marvelous pertinacity of children, "Want to see how high I can bounce again?" I looked, I am afraid, rather blasé this time. A few minutes later, somewhat diffidently, Daphne asked if I would like to see her new tricycle. Artists need new devices for their audiences. Daphne was learning rapidly the vanity and precariousness of applause. But for the moment she had bounced very high.

But You Haven't Changed a Bit

If one has lived long enough, one is sure at irregular intervals to run into old acquaintances who remark in a tone that implies both surprise and enthusiasm, "But you haven't changed a bit." Sometimes there are candid addenda made: "Of course, you have put on a little weight," or "Naturally, you don't look just like the kid you were thirty-five years ago," or, defiantly, "I should have recognized you anywhere." Not only does the acquaintance who says that you have not changed think he is paying a compliment; when one hears such an observation, one is automatically elated. But why?

Does one really have the illusion that in one's youth one was so fine and fair that any change would have been for the worse? Or perhaps the old acquaintance is not merely referring to physical appearance; he is referring to the spiritual and moral tone, the intellectual mode, the nuances of manner—all of which, he insists, have remained identical. And here, too, one finds oneself instinctively and foolishly gratified. Surely it would seem to be a matter for felicitation if one had changed very considerably. Not changed a bit? Indeed! The same enthusiasms, adolescent and uninformed; the identical semi-insights and hasty conclusions, the flashes of what (by eighteen-year-old standards) seemed corruscating wit; the bursts of what (at the same age) passed for lyric ecstasy. A pity if one hadn't improved over all that!

But those who intend a compliment by saying one has not changed, frequently mean the compliment, and are expressing a touching human loyalty to what they earlier knew and liked. In a world where, as Heraclitus remarked early in Greek philosophy, all is changing save the law of change, it is reassuring to find that one's friends are still recognizable, still intrinsically the same. The pleasure is partly that of relieved surprise. The old classmate recognizes the teen-ager in the tycoon, the freshman he once knew in the now formidable public man. The pleasure is half one of pathos—in our hearts we know everything has changed indeed, ourselves and our friends, and when we can clutch at some permanence, discover (or allege to discover)

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some continuity, we are "arrested, we are rebuked, we are delivered."

Sometimes, it must be confessed however, the hard thought crosses one's mind that there is a note of bitterness or of irony in the phrase, "But you haven't changed a bit." It is not always a compliment that is intended. What is meant is, as an ignorant preacher once eloquently put it: "The leper cannot change his spots."

On Not Keeping a Journal

The journal is become a popular literary mode again. Gide's lifelong personal notebook is coming out in volume after volume, and attracting wide attention. I suspect journals are avidly read by a good many people who rather wish they had kept one, and feel that they can at least settle for some substitute genius who took the trouble to write out his thoughts and his memories. As to Gide, one of the mysteries is where he found time to write anything else *but* his journal. Amiel, of course, hardly did write anything else.

With most of us in the modern world, the energies that might have gone into a journal are drained off in reports to committees, in telephone conversations, in argumentative letters to public utilities. Moreover, it is almost impossible to start to keep a journal without feeling a little self-conscious and perhaps, it must be admitted, a little absurd. In one's mind's eye, one begins to see the five collected volumes. Twenty or thirty years from now in, say, Volume IV, there will be a brief comment: "Saw last night *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Flashes of real insight, genuine characters, but also poetic *langueurs* and considerable rhetoric." In the footnotes, perhaps some conscientious editor will have an explanation next to an asterisk: "A play by a young playwright, Tennessee Williams, well known in the forties." And suddenly unquenchable laughter overcomes the incipient five-volume keeper of a journal. Is it really likely that there will be a multi-volumed edition of one's thoughts, and that some editor will devote the dull accolade of footnotes to one's random thoughts? Perhaps, but it takes an unusually innocent self-confidence to believe it.

Of course, even an uninteresting journal by an uninteresting mind may, forty or fifty years from now, have a documentary value. One can promise oneself perhaps that some critic some day will be saying of one's persistent and insectivorous jottings: "The very commonplaceness of the mind that wrote this journal makes its entries particularly revealing. Here is the average middlebrow intellectual of the period, faithful to all its clichés and naïvely committed to all its current assumptions. If this had been an original mind, it would have been much less interesting to us now than the genteel, well-bred, conventional and standard type that it is. The poor man thought he was being utterly, uniquely himself. What a perfection of routine banality he really was, and how perfect a mirror of his times! We should be grateful to him that he was not better than he was. Had he been, it would have been much worse for us."

Come to think of it, a journal that is long enough cannot help, in one way or another, being a classic. I am tempted, rather late, to begin now.

Finality Is Where You Find It

It was ten years since I had gone to Europe and I did not need to be reminded that much had happened on both sides of the Atlantic, and on it, since I had last set foot on a transatlantic liner. But things were much as they had been ten years ago, at least on the eve of a voyage. The hundreds of small chores, and what seemed the thousands of little pieces of unfinished business, the letters to be answered, the people to be said good-by to, the dentist to be seen, the shopping to be done, the visits postponed all year that suddenly seemed imperative on the very day before departure. How familiar it all seemed, and how overwhelming.

Well, here it is a few hours later, the pilot long since dropped, the last steamer letter opened. And suddenly, as of old, the visits unmade, the letters unanswered, the ragged edges left ragged—all seem blessedly remote and delightfully negligible. These

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things will await one's return, or won't: so much the better. And as of old, one turns to this new interim world. There is a reservation to be made for a place in the dining room, a purser's form to be filled out, one's cabin mate to become acquainted with, the passenger list to be conned, the ship to be explored. The world of one's familiar preoccupations is there left behind, the world of Europe is still remote. Sea change, it is called.

And what of those urgencies that one has left behind? There are several days to write finis to the unfinished. One way is to leave it quite definitively unfinished. It now hardly seems worth the cost of a radiogram to retrieve or to correct. Five times round the deck makes a mile. The first sitting is at six-thirty, the second at eight. First things first, but the first things of last week are not first any longer. They are, perforce, finished. Finality is where you find it.

Forever Now

My host, a man of letters with a taste for philosophy, and I had been discussing time and eternity on a hilltop by the Mediterranean where indeed it did seem on this summer day as if time must have a stop. Later that day I found myself reflecting on the curious illusion which, it seems to me, has dominated many a reputed thinker from Plato and Plotinus down.

Eternity, in the great mystical and rationalist tradition, as everyone knows (or as the readers of this journal may be expected to know), does not mean an endlessly long time. Indeed, no better reason could be sought for an escape from time than the certified prospect that one would, under whatever paradisial circumstances, have to go on living always and endlessly. For time not only bringeth all things—but brings them, the same ones, over and over again: a discovery many people make even before middle age sets in. Immortality that went on endlessly, only in a "world elsewhere," would be as monotonous as if it were perpetuity here in this too well-explored home cosmos. No, what the great mystics and the great rationalists have meant, is, of course, not a long time but a transtemporal now, an Eternal Now, a present rescued from change, an instant rescued from the flow of time and fixed beyond change or variation in the eternal.

But surely second thought would make it clear that there is precious little to distinguish the Eternal Now of the saint from the passing moment of the secular Epicurean. If eternity is always now, is not the now by which we are completely absorbed, for the time being eternal? A gesture of love, a modulation of music, a stab of pain —are these not of the same dimension while we are aware of them, as the beatitude of the angels or the tortures of the damned? Everyone has known such moments of heaven or hell, instants that were forevers—dreadful or delicious. Doubtless it is from such moments that the mystics have borrowed their notions of eternity. There is little by which one can tell now and forever apart. Now stops only when we forget it, and forever is perhaps only a name for such forgetfulness.

In the Winter Number . . .

A portrait of W. E. B. Du Bois by J. Saunders Redding, one of the series of American Scholar Portraits.

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The Revolving Bookstand

The American Past: Principles and Practice

Lloyd Morris

The Age of Jackson, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 1945. $5.00.
The American Experience, by Henry Bamford Parkes. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1947. $3.50
The American Past, by Roger Butterfield. New York: Simon and Schuster. 1947. $10.
The Time Is Noon, by Hiram Haydn. New York: Crown Publishers. 1948. $3.50.
Raintree County, by Ross Lockridge, Jr. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1948. $3.95.

In these books two historians, a journalist and two novelists deal with the American past. Widely praised by reviewers, the books have enjoyed conspicuous success with the reading public. Since the writers are all members of the same literary generation, this reception suggests that they speak, with some degree of authority, for their contemporaries—Americans between the ages of thirty and forty-five, whose collective decisions will strongly influence the nation's future.

That the authors share a common anxiety about the American future is clear from their books. It is also clear that this anxiety is what inspires their common preoccupation with our past. Writing under the stress of a crisis which civilization itself may not survive, their books are eloquent with the sense of urgency and mission. They are aware that hope of surmounting the crisis is largely founded on American policy and action; they know how gravely hope may be compromised by increasing cynicism, disenchantment and inertia. So they are using history as a weapon, to counteract them; to clarify our purposes and revitalize our spirit. Their object in dealing with the American past is to set forth its meaning, and from it to gain a more effective understanding of the problems which confront us now. "If democracy is indeed to be the hope of the future," Mr. Schlesinger notes, "we know now that we must have its lineaments clearly in mind, so that we may the more surely recognize it and the more responsibly act upon it." This stern necessity is the incentive to which all five authors have responded.

It is therefore true that although the subjects of these books are different, their themes are virtually identical. Each in his own way has laid down an explicit challenge. Each calls on us to define what we really mean by democracy; to determine the degree of our faith in it as a social principle; to decide whether or not we genuinely wish to make it work as a way of life. It is noteworthy that, whereas none of them doubts our ability as a nation to make democracy work should we so decide, none is willing to assert that we have fully succeeded in the attempt at any time in our history. Equally noteworthy is the fact that, in exploring the reasons for this lack of success in the past, they arrive at remarkably similar conclusions.

The result is that these books compel our recognition of a fundamental conflict in American life, and persuade us that it cannot be allowed to continue without extreme risk to our social order, and so to the rest of the world. What they demonstrate, from

•LLOYD MORRIS is the author of a number of books, the best known of which is, perhaps, a biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Rebellious Puritan (1927)*. Mr. Morris is also a frequent reviewer for the New York *Herald Tribune* Sunday *Book Review*. He is currently at work on a sequel to his recent widely-acclaimed *Postscript to Yesterday*.

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various points of view, is that the principles which we profess as a nation are constantly being defeated by the practices which—either as individuals, or as members of social groups serving special interests—we condone and participate in. "Can we," the central character of *The Time Is Noon* inquires, "make good our theoretical devotion to democracy—social, political and economic democracy—make it work and make it stick? . . . For if we cannot make those principles good, the principles themselves will go down, to stay for the full count. . . . We must recover, and fast, from the split between our professed convictions and our practice—or we are not going to recover." None of the other writers has stated the alternatives so forcibly as Mr. Haydn, but all are profoundly aware that our society cannot long postpone a choice between them.

What this choice implies is brilliantly expounded in *The Age of Jackson.* The youngest of contemporary American historians, Mr. Schlesinger is certainly among the most talented as a creative writer. Dealing with a period in which "there was a close correspondence between the movement of politics and the movement of ideas," his success in presenting it dynamically owes as much to vivid characterization and insight into psychology as to masterly intellectual analysis. But the force of his book derives from an obvious parallelism between the Jacksonian revolution and the Rooseveltian New Deal:

> As the private conscience grew increasingly powerless to impose effective restraints on the methods of business, the public conscience, in the form of the democratic government, had to step in to prevent the business community from tearing society apart in its pursuit of profit.

The necessity, urgent for Roosevelt no less than for Jackson, still confronts us. Because the business community is moved rather by class than by public interests, its control of the government "has invariably brought national affairs to a state of crisis and exasperated the rest of society into dissatisfaction bordering upon revolt." The moral of the Jacksonian experience, Mr. Schlesinger suggests, is that "the demands of the future—whatever readjustments they may compel for our government and our economy—will best be met by a society in which no single group is able to sacrifice democracy and liberty to its own interests." The problem for American liberalism remains what it has always been: in a society perpetually in unstable equilibrium to "preserve as much variety within the state as is consistent with energetic action by the government."

Mr. Parkes—like Mr. Schlesinger a professor of history—is less confident that a solution can be reached without drastic modifications in the American political and economic structure. Reviewing the development of our cultural tradition, he contends that only by adapting agrarian principles to an industrial economy can Americans today bring into being the kind of society that will fulfill their national ideals. Most Americans, he asserts, still wish to live in "a property owners' democracy." But they are reluctant, or unable, to give political effect to the principles which would make such a society possible.

> Attracted by the mirage of progress, and confused and misled by the exponents of business enterprise, they continued to hope that the growth of big industry would somehow prove not to be incompatible with economic democracy and opportunity for all. In consequence, a kind of pathological schism, a lack of adaptation to realities, developed within the American mind.

According to Mr. Parkes, the ultimate criterion of all social and econimic development in the United States should be the enhancement of human dignity and the extension of human freedom. These, he asserts, are the purposes which our institutions were designed to serve. But Mr. Parkes sees these purposes increasingly frustrated by those whom Mr. Schlesinger describes as "the business community." If not brought under effective social control, he warns, American capitalism's obsessive concentration on profits promises to reduce Americans "to a mechanistic order imposed by an absolute state."

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rative. He emphasizes the persistence, in American life, of two dominant impulses: "the desire to see all men free and equal, and the desire to be richer and stronger than anyone else." Americans, he claims, have always made liberty their primary objective—but some have always identified liberty with an unobstructed opportunity to acquire wealth and power by any means available, and at any cost to society as a whole. Like Mr. Schlesinger and Mr. Parkes, Mr. Butterfield sees American history as an incessant conflict between the countervailing forces of conscience and cupidity. In one form or another, the basic struggle between Jefferson and Hamilton has come down the years, and still continues. The primacy of human rights over property rights has never been finally established; and whether government shall mainly serve the interests of the wealthy and powerful, or advance the welfare of the common man, remains an issue which Americans attempt to settle pragmatically once every four years.

Mr. Haydn, in *The Time Is Noon*, uses an historical parallel as adroitly as Mr. Schlesinger. The action of his novel takes place during the spring, summer and autumn of 1929, a period of crisis which few mature Americans are likely to forget—one in which the issues, and the incorrigibly confused thinking applied to them, betray a spectacular resemblance to the issues and thinking of the present year. The novel is outstanding for the rare combination of dramatic power with a rich content of ideas, but its major significance lies in its picture of the American scene. Mr. Haydn has worked on an enormous canvas, and he has crowded it densely with recognizably representative figures; the result is a panorama of our national life unrivalled, in our recent fiction, with respect to geographic scope, social diversity and economic contrast.

Here, again, one watches the tragic negation of principle by practice. Mr. Haydn shows the play of organized forces determined to achieve and maintain power at any social cost—tycoons at one end of the scale,

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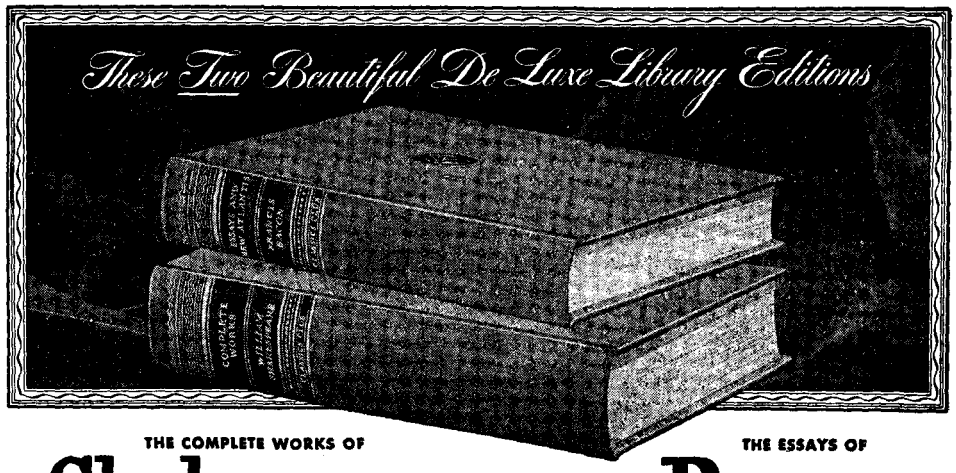

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Communists at the other—and shows, too, that they seek power for its own sake, with a contempt for, or distortion of, both moral purpose and moral responsibility. Yet the final effect of *The Time Is Noon* is not that of an indictment of special groups within our social order. Its moral, clearly, is that collectively we are responsible for our present plight; that our willing complicity in our situation may prove to be the measure of our guilt, should disaster overwhelm us.

The possibility of disaster is absent from Mr. Lockridge's *Raintree County*, which ranges over a half-century of history, but is framed within a single day of the year 1892. Its tone is abundantly hopeful—correctly so, since in 1892 most Americans did not question the automatic continuance of progress, faced the future with absolute confidence, and had genuine faith in their collective ability to make things come right.

Depending upon whether they read *Raintree County* with 1892 or 1948 in the forefront of their minds, people will find it either nostalgic or ironical. But, whether deliberate or not, its irony is its greatest literary merit. For the book invites us to assess the value of our traditional faiths, and to declare whether they are to be discarded as proved illusions, or retained as practicable guides to social action. In Mr. Lockridge's mind, there was evidently no doubt. To have any meaning, his central character asserts, the Declaration of Independence, like the Constitution, must be rewritten by every generation in such fashion as to meet its needs. America is an endless adventure, an "Idea" perpetually to be approximated. For the rest, Mr. Lockridge saw American salvation, as does Mr. Parkes, in the adaptation of agrarian principles, and the application of agrarian virtues, to our industrial economy.

These five books, dealing so variously with our national past, do not spare us the record of our failures. But they also remind us that Americans have always been aggrieved by the difference between what is and what ought to be; that American culture, seldom relinquishing the assumption that men can transform their experience and

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In the Winter Number . . .

THE REVOLVING BOOKSTAND will present John Cournos as guest reviewer.

THE READER REPLIES

(Continued from page 485)

our *hybris* will invite certain *ātē*. We can't get away with it without little people everywhere being made to suffer—if civilization itself doesn't go down the drain, as is likely.

Rose Gordon LeVan
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(Continued on page 500)

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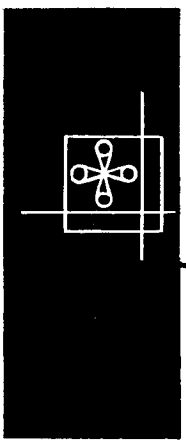

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I read Mr. Harrison Smith's article in the Summer number with considerable interest, but I wish to point out three very bad factual errors:

1) On page 308 Mr. Smith writes a grotesque error. He says, second line up from the bottom, that *Amazing Stories* was "the earliest magazine devoted entirely to fantasy." This magazine, which came out in 1926, might well be styled the earliest devoted "entirely to *scientific* fantasy," but, in point of fact, it was preceded by a far more important magazine from a literary point of view by three years; the first such magazine was *Weird Tales*, established in March, 1923. *Weird Tales* published both science-fiction and macabre fiction, though emphasizing the latter. Science-fiction, though published sparingly, was almost the only fiction to appear in the popular magazine, *Science and Invention*, which preceded *Amazing Stories* by a good many years; however, its science-fiction was rather more fantastic than scientific.

2) On page 309 Mr. Smith commits another howler. He writes, "One of the most fluent and creative of these writers developed by *Amazing Stories* is H. P. Lovecraft." Now nothing could be farther from the facts. Mr. Lovecraft was developed as a writer almost exclusively by *Weird Tales*. *Amazing Stories* published only one story by Lovecraft, "The Colour Out of Space," in September, 1927; *Astounding* published two, "The Shadow Out of Time," and "At the Mountains of Madness," which currently appears in my anthology, *Strange Ports of Call*. *Weird Tales* published something like 92 per cent of the Lovecraft stories and poems, including all the stories Mr. Smith mentions and inadvertently attributes to *Amazing Stories*.

3) On page 310 Mr. Smith declares that "the stories of . . . Algernon Blackwood, *The Doll and One Other*, have recently appeared in new editions." The Coppard book, *Fearful Pleasures*, is a collection of macabre tales reprinted from earlier books; but *The Doll and One Other* is an original Arkham House publication, and *not* at all a

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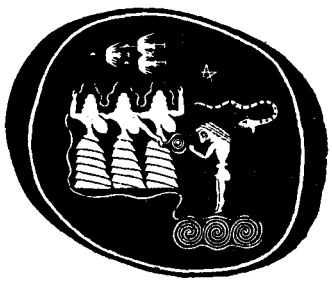

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reprint; these stories had never appeared in print prior to our publication of Mr. Blackwood's book.

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Portrait of John Dewey

It is not surprising that Mr. Howard Selsam, head of the Communist Jefferson School of Social Science should find my "Portrait of John Dewey" (Winter, 1947-48) distasteful. I have no doubt that Mr. Fritz Kuhn and Father Coughlin would also find it distasteful. But I cannot permit to pass unchallenged his violently distorted account of some of the things I wrote. For example, according to Mr. Selsam, I have maintained that the only alternatives to John Dewey's philosophical position are supernaturalism or communism. The absurdity of Mr. Selsam's characterization is apparent from the fact that in discussing technical philosophical criticisms of Dewey I refer to "philosophers, some of whom, like Bertrand Russell, share Dewey's political views, and some of whom, like George Santayana, do not." As any competent philosopher knows, Bertrand Russell is neither a Communist nor a supernaturalist. Nor is Santayana, despite his praise of Catholicism, any more of a conventional supernaturalist than, despite his praise of Stalin, a Communist.

Mr. Selsam, faithful to the confused logic of dialectical materialism, cannot distinguish between a philosopher's political doctrines and his world views. Any number of different conceptions of the world is compatible, for example, with an acceptance of democracy. In discussing Dewey's allegiance to democratic *social* and *political* ideals and practices, which places authority in the methods of scientific inquiry and the processes of freely given consent, I indicated that his chief critics on *this* score are theological fundamentalists and political totalitarians, especially the Communists. This is patently true and is apparent from the tone and substance of Communists diatribes against him, including Mr. Selsam's

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signed and pseudonymous articles in the *New Masses*. In order to include himself in decent company, Mr. Selsam pretends that I am referring to philosophers who disagree with Dewey on honest intellectual grounds, not because his views are taboo with the Kremlin.

Mr. Selsam complains that in answering the question I raised—"Why is Dewey hated so wholeheartedly by clerical authoritarians, by Fascists, Nazis and Communists?"—I do not indicate that these groups have different reasons for hating him, and that they hate him with different degrees of fervor. He is mistaken about the first point, but right about the second, and I hasten to add that the Communists hate him most. The reasons I detailed at length. They are, briefly, his support of *democratic* socialism, his criticism of the Soviet reign of cultural and political terror, and his two-volume report as chairman of the commission to investigate the truth about the Moscow Trials which presented the evidence that these trials were "frame-ups." I may add here, also, Dewey's refusal to recognize perjury as a civil right, even when committed by Communists.

Mr. Selsam is disturbed at the "sophomoric touch" revealed in my references to John Dewey's "intellectual humility," "essential courtesy to others" and "respect for the dignity of other persons." As a postgraduate student of the *Pravda* school of epithets—one style for Stalin and another for his critics—Mr. Selsam's irritation is understandable. All I can plead in extenuation, however, is that I was requested by the Editors to write a personal portrait, that I have observed these traits in long years of association with John Dewey, and that my words are less extravagant than the personal tributes of Dewey's non-Communist philosophical opponents.

Sidney Hook
New York University

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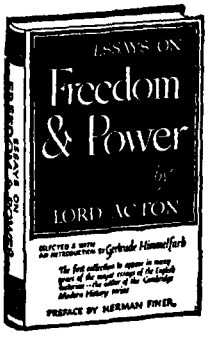

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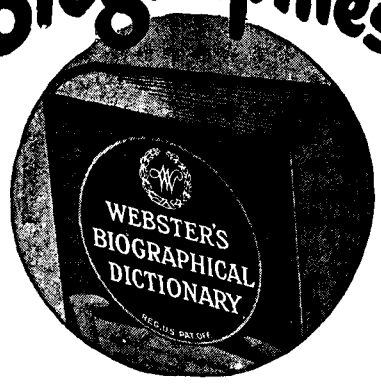

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